

# THE DILEMMA OF RESILIENCE, AS A SECURITY STRATEGY, FOR THE DONORS AND THE HOSTS IN RESPONSE FOR THE SYRIAN CRISIS: IN THE CASE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND JORDAN

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## ABSTRACT

Since 2015, both the donors (the European Union) and the hosts (Jordan) of the Syrian refugees have started to adopt resilience as a better security strategy. When dealing with crises, particularly those linked to prolonged wars with no foreseeable solutions in the near future, resilience has become a means and a goal. Yet, it may represent a dilemma for the EU and Jordan. Scholars like Giulia Sinatti and Rosanne Anholt argue that the EU, with its focus on resilience of the origin and transit countries of migrants and refugees, could jeopardize the stability of refugee-hosting states. These already burdened states with its own problems cannot handle more refugees. In addition, the refugees are facing many difficulties to find jobs and they are struggling to find their way to Europe. As a result, resilience may seem threatening rather than safeguarding the security of Europe. Thus, the paper's main question is *How are the donors and the hosts trying to resolve the dilemma of resilience, as a security strategy, in response for the Syrian crisis in the case of the EU and Jordan?* Based on document analysis for the EU and Jordan's documents including their official bilateral and multilateral agreements, reports from their official websites and textual analysis of the current literature on building resilience, this paper argues that *resilience may appear as a dilemma, however, the EU and Jordan are trying to resolve it by adopting resilience as a pragmatic approach, focusing on its bright side, and tackling the challenges, which appear as a result of adopting it. The EU's resilience building in Jordan aims to enhance the capacities of the refugees and the local communities and keep a balance between them. What's more, it aims to support those refugees' self-reliance and Jordan's social cohesion. Thus, to keep the refugees in place and prevent them from flooding into Europe.*

**Keywords:** Resilience, Dilemma, the Syrian Refugee Crisis, Host countries, Donors

## INTRODUCTION

The Syrian Crisis is one of the most drastic humanitarian crises ever. Since 2011, the world is watching one of its worst crises ever with no signs of feasible peaceful resolution for it in the near future. Up till now, 400 thousand persons have been killed 5.6 million have become internally displaced and 6 million have

fled the country [5]. The United Nation Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has registered over 5.6 million Syrian refugees mostly in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Some of those refugees have dangerously managed their way through the Mediterranean to Europe while the majority remain at the neighboring countries including Jordan.

For this reason, the ongoing war in Syria does not only affect Syria alone, but the whole region including Jordan. Moreover, the impact of this crisis is not restricted to the region alone, but even for Europe. The ongoing crisis cannot be seen apart from Europe 2015-2016 Migrant Crisis, known as the refugee crisis. During these two years, Europe received more than 1.2 million asylum seekers, from which 334,820 were Syrians. This number represents 28% of all of Europe's asylum seekers, the highest share of any country [15]. This crisis made the EU adopt different security strategies to respond to its current crises including the migration crisis. The new strategy is illustrated by building state and societal resilience, which has become one of the EU's five priorities of its foreign and security policy. This has been emphasized in the European Union Global Strategy of 2016 [14].

This new way of thinking was in parallel to the international community's adoption of resilience building of the refugees and the hosting communities in response for the Syrian refugee crisis as appears in the 2015 Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan [24]. Hence resilience which is defined by the EU Commission as the ability of the states, societies, communities and individuals to manage, tackle, adapt, and recover from shocks and crises became the new approach for the EU and the international community [14].

Yet, it may represent a dilemma for the EU and Jordan. Some scholars like Giulia Sinatti and Rosanne Anholt argue that the EU, with its focus on resilience of the origin and transit countries of migrants and refugees, could jeopardize the stability of refugee-hosting states. These already burdened states with its own problems cannot handle more refugees. In addition, the refugees are facing many difficulties to find jobs and they are struggling to find their way to Europe. As a result, resilience may seem threatening rather than safeguarding the security of Europe. Thus, the paper's main question is ***How are the donors and the hosts trying to resolve the dilemma of resilience, as a security strategy, in response of the Syrian refugee crisis in the case of the EU and Jordan?***

In order to answer this question, the paper will proceed as follows: the first section addresses the Syrian crisis and its impact on Jordan and the EU. The second section will deal with the role of Jordan, as an overburdened host and a transit country and its response to the crisis, the role of the EU as the main donor, its potential, although increasingly reluctant host, and provides empirical insights of the EU's resilience building in Jordan. The third section will conceptualize resilience in the EU and Jordan 's foreign and security policy and trace its origin. The next section addresses the dilemma of resilience for Jordan and the EU and

how they are trying to resolve it. Finally, the conclusion, it is implications for policymakers and the upcoming research in regard of the dilemma of resilience.

## **METHODOLOGY**

As for the methodology of this paper, it's descriptive methodology, builds primarily upon textual analysis of secondary data of various texts from official European and Jordanian websites, their reports, NEWS reports, and scholarly literature. In addition document analysis has been conducted for different EU-Jordan official policies, including their bilateral and multilateral agreements to trace the goals for Jordan and the EU within these policies, the shift towards resilience as a priority for the EU, the new mechanisms and tools the EU uses to build resilience in Jordan , and how it's might be a better strategy, at the same time, it might be a dilemma for them both.

## **THEORY**

In order to understand how resilience, as a security strategy, might appear as a dilemma for both Jordan and the EU, it is critical to understand the shift to resilience, its causes with the policies they both have adopted to achieve it. Moreover, understanding the outcomes of their working and the challenges they have as hosts or donors is also essential. This explains how these challenges are hindering them from reaping the best results of resilience building. A qualitative research approach has been conducted, based on Jordan as a case study to explore, understand resilience in the Jordanian context and what can be done to resolve the dilemma of resilience.

## **RESULTS**

The study finds that resilience building might appear as dilemma for both Jordan and the EU. Yet, both of them are trying to resolve it and make it workable as much as possible. Further, it finds that they even can make it both more workable. As for Jordan, it can improve its potentials as a host country. It is true that the relaxation of the trade regulations, known as the Rules of Origin scheme, has contributed to improve Jordan exports to the EU, however to get its full potentials, more efforts are to be done from Jordan including, raising the awareness of the business community about the scheme. In addition, Jordan has to identify and address the obstacles that hinders businesses development.

As for the EU, it can also improve its potentials as a host. the EU is hosting only a very little share of the world'refugees of its whole population. However, as Jordan has utilized the refugees as a development asset, the EU probably can by hosting more refugees utilize them as a development asset, specially, when considering the demographic structure for the EU's population and it needs to labor. Adding to that, more efforts to be done from the EU to balance its humanitarian and political efforts. This would be extremely significant because

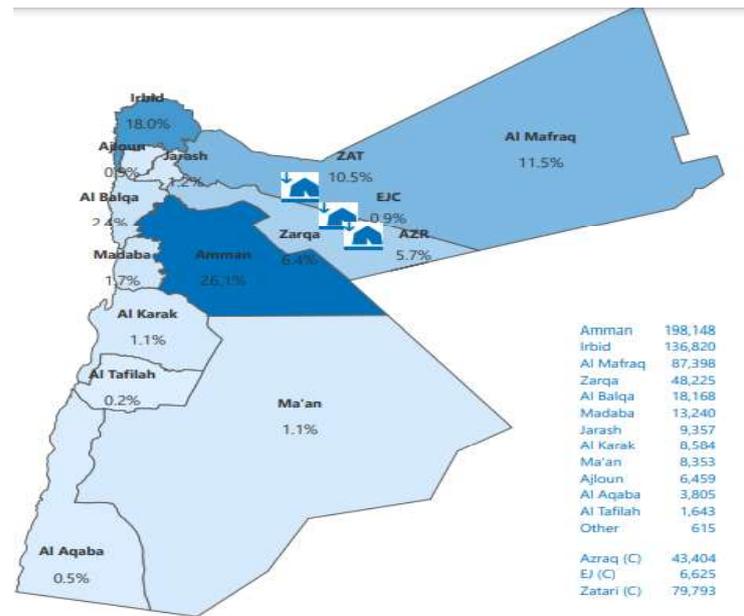
what the region truly needs is a greater political engagement of the EU, with the aim of achieving a peaceful political resolution for the conflict, and that would make resilience more workable in the region.

## **DISCUSSION**

The significance of this study stems from different reasons. First, taking Jordan as a case of the Southern partners would be of great interest for the EU's policymakers since there is not sufficient empirical research about the EU's role in resilience building in the Southern neighborhood. Second, the significance of the case itself, as Jordan is a strategic partner for the EU, due to its role in promoting stability, moderation and inter-faith tolerance in the Middle East, its crucial to see the EU role in preserving its stability through resilience building. Finally, the paper concludes with different recommendations for both the EU's and Jordan policymakers that contribute to make resilience, as a security strategy, more workable.

## **THE SYRIAN CRISIS' IMPACT ON JORDAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The repercussions of the crisis are catastrophic for the whole region including Jordan. The flooding of refugees has intensified the country's own problems. Jordan is a middle-low class country with limited resources, an increasing rate of poverty and unemployment and located within an instable region. The Syrian refugees have imposed financial, social, and institutional strains on Jordan as a host community. As of September 2021, there were 670,637 registered Syrian refugees and asylum seekers in Jordan by UNHCR [21]. However, the real total of Syrians is estimated at around 1.3 million, when taking into consideration the unregistered refugees. The majority of those refugees (estimated 81%) are living out of the official camps for the Syrian refugees in Jordan Zaatari, Margeeb Alfhood, and Azraq. The following figure shows the allocation of registered refugees in Jordan within the camps and the Jordanian governates according to the UNHCR :

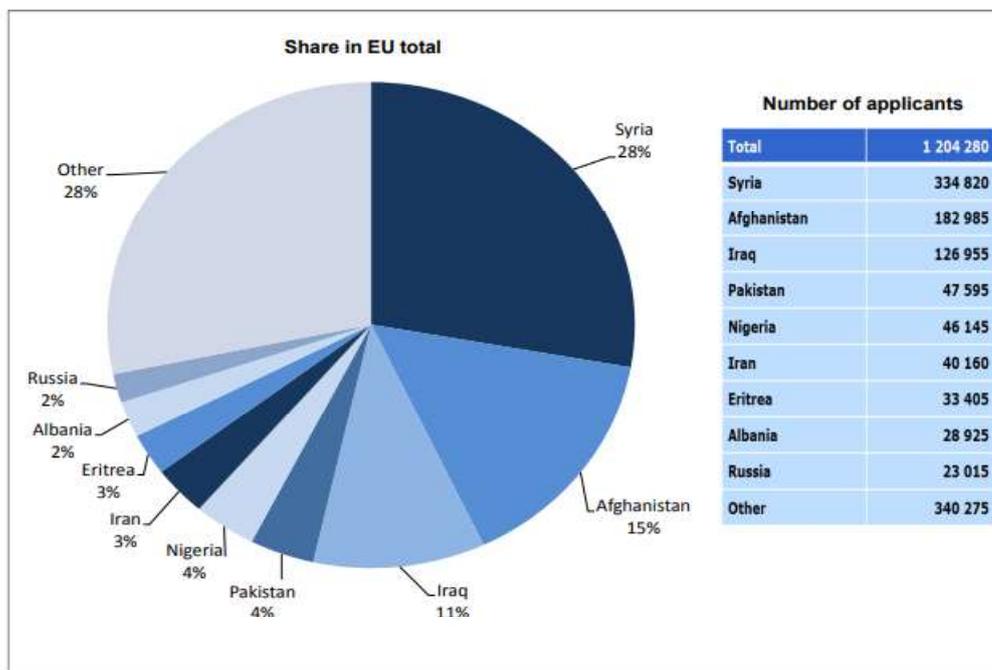


**Fig. 1.** UNHCR Registered Persons of Concern Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Jordan as of August 2021[21].

This huge number of refugees and their distribution within the local communities have drastic consequences on the social cohesion, socio-economic stability, and political stability of the kingdom as a whole.

The scope of this paper cannot cover in detail the impact of refugees on Jordan. The socio-economic impacts of a massive number of refugees are tremendous. Jordan is witnessing increased pressure on the poor infrastructure, an extra demand on water, energy, shelter, educational and health services, and accelerating competition within the labor sector between Jordanians and Syrians. Moreover, there are political and security impacts which can never be underestimated. Jordan's position, as a part of a coalition that targets terrorist groups and combats extremist radical ideologies, made the country always a target for radical groups. Thus, there is always a threat to its internal and external security. This was the case in 2016 when the country suffered from an attack on the borders between Jordan and Syria, known as al Rukban attacks [3]. This was not the only attack the country had, this reason forced Jordan to adopt different policy to deal with security challenges in term of refugees. Hence, there was a shift from an open-door policy at first to a more tightened and strict policy in front of refugees [24].

As for Europe, as mentioned, the ongoing crisis cannot be separated from its 2015-2016 Europe Migrant Crisis, also known as the refugee crisis, when Europe received almost 1.2 million asylum seekers, from which 334,820 were Syrians, accounting for 28% of all of Europe's asylum seekers. This figure represents the highest share of all applicants as the figure shows :



**Fig. 2.** *First time asylum seekers in the EU Member States by country of citizenship, 2016[15].*

The prolonged war makes a new wave of refugees to Europe possible. In addition, there is the securitization of those refugees. According to the Securitization theory, an issue is securitized once it is presented as a threat to national security [7]. Hence, those refugees are presented as a threat to Europe as they might affect its social cohesion. Besides that, there are fears from the existence of terrorists among refugees or terrorist attacks. All these fears have increased the need to secure its borders ahead of new wave of refugees.

These massive impacts on both Jordan and the EU, along of the absence of a foreseeable solution in the near future made them both adopt different policies. The following section addresses these policies ending with building the resilience of the refugees and the host communities.

### **JORDAN'S AND THE EUROPEAN UNION'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS**

Jordan has always been a safe haven for refugees and forced migrants throughout its history. Although it is not a signatory of the 1951 Refugees Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Jordan has witnessed different waves of refugees. First, it has received Palestinians since the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Then, refugees arrived from Lebanon during the 1975-1991 civil war. The Iraqis came in two waves; the 1991 Gulf War and after the American invasion in 2003, and most recently Syrian refugees crossed the border, with the rising of the Syrian conflict since 2011[1].

As mentioned earlier, receiving almost 1.3 million refugees had added a large strain on the country. However, Jordan, with the support of the international community including the EU, has managed to contain the crisis to a certain extent. The government has adopted a reactive approach which enables it to make such a containment.

With the rising of the conflict in 2011, it adopted an open-door policy and welcomed those refugees. With the support of the UNHCR, it opened Al Za'atari in July 2012, the first official refugee camp for the Syrian refugees. Then, Mrajeeb Al Fhood in April 2013, and Al Azraq was opened in April 2014. Moreover, it opened King Abdullah Park, a temporary camp in Irbid [24]. It was thought that authorizing building camps could be a way to increase international visibility and to attract international aids.

Yet, the escalation of the conflict in 2013 enhanced the security fears and securitizing Syrian refugees began by the government consequently. In order to control refugees' movements inside and outside the camps, the government established the Syrian Refugee Camp Directorate (SRCD) that year. Later, it was replaced by the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) as a branch of Jordan's security services [24].

Jordan's framework for dealing with refugees is based on its 1998 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed with UNHCR. According to it, Jordan accepts the definition of "refugee" as contained in the 1951 Convention and agrees that refugees should receive treatment accordingly. The inadequacy of this framework appeared gradually. Thus, it realized the need to establish a better legal framework. The result of its efforts was ripened in June 2014 with the National Resilience Plan (NRP), a three years programme of high priority investments in order to respond to the impact of the Syrian refugees. According to this plan, Jordan intended to invest US\$2.41 billion over three years in local institutions and host communities' different sectors including health, education, employment, energy, housing, and social protection [19].

The Jordan Response Plan (JRP) then was launched in December 2014. The JRP is a one-year programme planned as a co-work between the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) and the UN [24]. The significance of this plan is that it represents a new approach to the Syrian Crisis. Before 2013, the efforts of the Jordanian government were directed to present humanitarian relief. However, from 2014, national and international actors adopted resilience. It aims to achieve a long-term sustainable development for both refugees and host communities, social integration, capacity building, prevention of extremism, with an emphasis on the protection of the Syrian refugees.

The JRP estimated almost US\$3 billion to be pledged in 11 strategic sectors. As a result of the continuous flooding of refugees, the emphasis on a more long-

term resilient planning became even more urgent. Thus, the JRP 2015 was renewed until 2020 in two periods: the JRP 2016–2018 and the JRP 2018–2020 [24]. Then, it was renewed for additional two years. The shift of the JRP, to cover two years, indicates a shift from emergency intervention to a more sustainable long-term planning.

However, the government's commitment failed to address the need of the refugees and the host communities. This led to an increased tension between the two sides. For this reason and to decrease the dissatisfaction and tension between them both, the government added two pillars to the 2016 JRP—refugees and resilience—to address the needs of both refugees and host communities [19]. In other words, building resilience became the priority of the Jordanian government.

Finally, with the aim of bringing a more regionally coherent process that integrates refugee and resilience programming, Jordan signed the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), a jointly-led plan by the UNHCR and the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), launched in 2015. It constitutes one regional plan, with five separate chapters covering Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq. Each chapter comprises the national response plan for the Syrian crisis, in the case of Jordan, it comprises the Jordan Response Plan. This plan aims to achieve strategic regional cooperation that could ensure protection, humanitarian assistance and resilience for refugees and their vulnerable host communities [24].

Thus, building resilience became the mean and the goal for the country. Through it, the country managed to address those needs and preserve its social cohesion, though in a limited way.

When it comes to the EU, the EU's response comes in two directions; as a reluctant host and as a main international donor to support those refugees, within Syria and in the neighboring countries, including Jordan.

As mentioned, almost 5.5 million Syrian refugees live in neighboring countries. Yet, Syrian refugees have sought asylums in 130 countries. European countries host over 1 million Syrian asylum-seekers and refugees, 70 percent being received only in two countries: Germany (59 percent) and Sweden (11 percent). This figure makes Germany the fifth largest host country globally, with over 1 million in total, and over half of those (560,000) are Syrians. Other European countries including Austria, Greece, the Netherlands and France receive between 2 to 5 percent, while the rest of the European countries host below 2 percent [29].

However, the sudden influx of refugees contributed to the EU 2015-2016 migration crisis, as mentioned earlier. Moreover, it sparked a political crisis that put the EU's migration policy under a real test. There was a clear disagreement among the member states on how to better respond to the refugees' flooding.

While some countries opened their arms, others raised fences and closed their borders. Thus, it was a challenge to the EU's solidarity as a whole. In addition to the political crisis, it sparked a humanitarian one as thousands died attempting to reach its shores [16].

Thus, the EU can be presented as a reluctant host that has been criticized for its strict policy in dealing with the refugees amid the 2015 immigrant crisis. Even the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon openly criticized it in front of the Australian Parliament in April, 2016 arguing that the EU policies negatively affect the obligation of member states under international humanitarian law and European law [26].

It is beyond the scope of this paper to cover the EU's migration policy and its fears that make the EU adopt such a strict policy. Yet, it was crucial to explain the EU role as a reluctant host. This role that makes it think of a better way to support those refugees and adopt a containment policy. This policy aims to support the Syrian refugees and the neighboring host countries, keep them where they are and prevent their flooding into Europe. Thus, since the onset of the crisis, the EU is a main international donor and a major player in building the resilience of those Syrians and the hosts including Jordan.

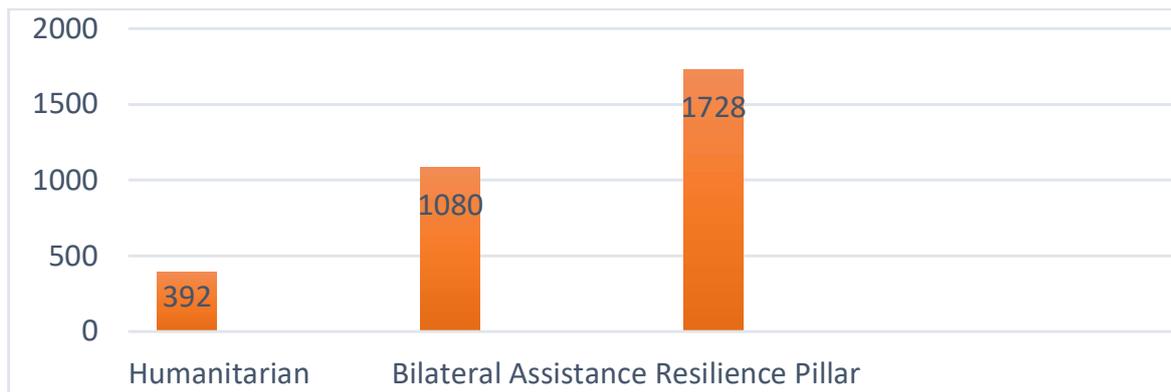
For the EU, Jordan is a main partner at the global and regional levels. As mentioned, Jordan plays a crucial role in promoting stability, moderation and inter-faith tolerance in the Middle East. Thus, the EU has realized the importance of increasing its support for such a significant actor and consistently sought for the advancement of its relation with Jordan. They have cooperation on different levels and across different sectors. The legal framework for such cooperation is organized through different bilateral or other multilateral agreements like the European Neighbourhood Policy. Thus, the mission of the EU Delegation to Jordan ensures the representation of the EU in the country, it implements, follows up and advances their bilateral relation in different fields ranging from politics, economy, trade, security, rule of law, external assistance and cooperation [23].

Supporting the country to respond to the crisis was crucial. As a donor and a member of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), the EU's support has been directed to build resilience after 2015, after it was directed to the humanitarian relief. In the context of resilience building, the EU's ultimate goal is to merge its instruments in Jordan's national plans, work with a multitude of state and non-state actors in implementing projects tackling issues of livelihoods, economic growth, protection and conflict resolution [17].

Its support can be seen in different directions; politically and economically. In the first aspect, the EU puts its efforts to enhance the international community's support to Jordan. Thus, after London 2016 conference, Supporting Syria and the Region, the EU has been co-hosting Brussels Conferences for Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region Since 2017. These conferences bring together the

world leaders, NGOs, and private sectors to address the Syrian crisis. In these conferences, the EU has emphasized on the point that Jordan should not be left alone and the international community has a duty toward such a main host. In addition, for the EU, the task is not only about raising funding to tackle this issue, but more importantly, to set ambition plans to integrate humanitarian and sustainable development axes for both refugees and host communities [27].

As for its economic support, since 2011, the European Union is a leading donor in supporting Jordan. It has channeled nearly €3.2 billion to Jordan through different instruments; humanitarian aid (€392 million) [9], bilateral assistance (€1080 million) [10] and resilience assistance (€1728 million) as the figure shows



**Fig. 3.** EU Financial Support to Jordan in Response for the Crisis since 2011 in millions € [9] [10]

Considering The humanitarian aid, it provides basic needs as healthcare, food, shelter, water and sanitation for both the refugees and vulnerable Jordanian families.

The Regional Trust Fund “MADAM” aims to bridge the gap between the humanitarian-development nexus. The EU established this special instrument in 2014 mainly to tackle longer term resilience and recovery needs of Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. Its efforts are directed toward both refugees and the hosting communities of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq. Through this fund, the EU has committed €300 million as a resilience support for Jordan [23]. The aim of this fund, by focusing on education, livelihood, water, sanitation, and health, is helping refugees and the vulnerable Jordanian families to live in dignity as much as possible.

Bilateral assistance, which is mobilized through the Macro- Financial Assistance (MFA) instrument, seeks to assist Jordan's economic growth, its economic reforms, and create more jobs. The EU signed the first MFA in March 2014 in a programme of €180 million, the MFA II was renewed in September 2017 to channel additional €200 million, and finally the MFA III, totaling EUR 500 million, was adopted on 15 January 2020 [10].

Yet, in the context of Covid 19, the EU approved another MFA programme of EUR 200 million to Jordan (reinforcing the resources made available under MFA-III). It aims to help Jordan curbs the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic. As of November 2020, the EU pledged EUR 250 million of macro-financial assistance to Jordan. EUR 150 million of which came from this programme [10].

A great shift in the EU-Jordan thinking about resilience building and instrumentalizing the refugees as a development opportunity is the 2016 EU-Jordan compact. It was signed in February 2016, with the aim of integrating humanitarian and development nexus. In this pact, the EU is committed to pledge multi-year grants and concessional loans; \$700 million as annual grant loans for three years, and concessional loans of \$1.9 billion. It also has a commitment to relax trade regulations [1].

In return, Jordan is obliged to meet certain targets. The first target is associated with those refugees' labor market access. Before the compact, they were paralyzed with many challenges that restrict their access to the Jordanian labor market. Now, Jordan has to issue 200,000 work permits for refugees in specified sectors. Moreover, the country must employ certain quotas of those refugees in different businesses, improve the investment climate, and legitimize Syrian businesses in the country. The second target is related to their education. Jordan commits to provide school places to all Syrian children, and some work training opportunities [1].

There are many implications for such a milestone agreement. First, the response to the crisis is no more restricted to offer humanitarian aid, but the focus now turns into the development pillar. It is thought that facilitating the access of refugees into the labor market contributes to their and the host communities 'development.

The second implication is related to the Jordanian trade. To reduce the negative impact of The Syrian Crisis which disrupted Jordan's traditional trade routes, the parties agreed on a special trade regime. Accordingly, Europe has to simplify rules of origin for products, in 52 product categories. Once it got into force in 2016, it incentivized Jordanian companies to diversify their products and to create decent jobs for Jordanians and Syrians. Since 2016, 15 companies have applied to gain benefits from the agreement, 13 have been approved to export to the EU with 6 of those exporting a value of €19.26 million [23].

After explaining the crisis and how it represents a challenge for both Jordan and the EU, it is critical to understand what resilience means and how the EU defines it. The following section will briefly focus on this issue.

## **DEFINING RESILIENCE**

This sections briefly reflects on the accounts that are relevant to the purpose of this article. Resilience, as a word, stems from the Latin word “resilire.” “Salire” means to leap or jump; the suffix “re” indicates repetition, or backward motion. It was introduced into the English language in the 17th Century.

The concept has flourished since the 1970s, with a special attribute to ecology systems studies. The ecologist Holling has a considerable contribution in the flourishing of the concept. He used the concept first to refer to the ecological systems' ability to absorb change and disruption. Other Scholars have asserted the significant contributions from psychology, where resilience suggests a shift in the focus from vulnerability and deficits to protective factors and adaptive capacities [4]. Since then, the concept has dominated vast areas of social and natural sciences. Each has its own vision of the concept. However, what is common in these definitions is that resilience is about the ability of a system, society, individual or state to adapt, be prepared and to bounce back after crisis.

As of the first decade of this century, resilience started to be related to global governance, migration, terrorism and other issues related to security studies. Governments, local communities and national or international organizations began to build their own resilience strategy to respond to crises. As for the EU, the internal and external crises that hit the EU in 2015, led resilience to be a key priority for its foreign and security policy, as emphasized in the 2016 European Union Global Strategy (EUGS). Taking the same definition from its previous policy, The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises in 2012, the Commission defines resilience as the capability of states, societies, communities and individuals to manage, tackle, adapt, and recover from shocks and crises [14].

Thus, resilience, which was first adopted in its humanitarian and development policy in 2012, is not restricted to it anymore, but even in its foreign and security policies. It becomes a key pillar to respond to different natural or man-made crises including the Syrian crisis.

However, as resilience has been adopted in different EU policies, its characteristics gets clearer. Tocci argues that the characteristics of the EU building resilience are; First, it is a comprehensive process that requires all EU actors (humanitarian, development, political) to work differently and more effectively together to achieve resilience objectives. Second, it asserts the responsibility of the national and local government to achieve resilience [31]. This implies the need to integrate resilience in national policies, as this is inside-outside process. This process can never be about the EU exporting plans to these countries, yet the EU offers its expertise and potentials to help those countries build their appropriate resilience plans.

Third, a resilience approach is characterized as people-centered and focused on the most vulnerable groups. This, by no means, is not only about empowering and increasing people's ability to absorb shocks, but it also constitutes an opportunity for transformation, in regard of adaptation, changing environments, improving livelihoods and economic opportunities [31]. Thus, building resilience strategies becomes essential to respond to crises. Yet, despite of its advantages, there are many aspects which have been criticized, making this approach seems to be considered as a dilemma for the EU and Jordan. The following section addresses this dilemma and how they are trying to address it.

### **RESILIENCE THE DILEMMA AND RESOLVING IT**

In order to illustrate how the development-resilience base approach might be a dilemma for the EU, considering the EU approach in its response to the Syrian refugee crisis is essential. Its goals are to bring an end to the conflict and enable the Syrian people to live in peace in their own country.

This approach has two main pillars, for each, the EU adopts a specific strategy. The first pillar is the political-security response. This response is illustrated by EU's strategy on Syria, which was adopted by the EU Council in 2017. It is part of the EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat. The key objectives of this strategy are summed up in main areas; ending the war through a peaceful political inclusive transition, the humanitarian needs, promoting democracy, human rights and freedom of speech, accountability for war crimes, and promoting the resilience of the Syrian population. Moreover, in order to exert influence on the Syrian regime, the EU has adopted different restrictive measures, sanctions, on almost 270 individuals and 70 entities since 2011 [11].

The second pillar is the humanitarian response. The EU and its member states are main donors to support the Syrians. since the beginning of the conflict, they have provided €17 billion to support those who have fled the war, both within and outside Syria [11]. This approach goes in parallel with the EU's position as a generous donor and a reluctant host.

Yet, this broad approach seems insufficient and there is imbalance between the political and humanitarian efforts. By its efforts to exert influence against the Assad regime through withdrawing from EU-Syrian partnership agreements and imposing sanctions, the EU has actually decreased its influence in the region politically and led to its political disengagement [32].

In addition, restrictive measures have not played a role, till now, to end the war neither they have facilitated the peaceful transition. Hence, focusing on the humanitarian response with such a political dis-engagement has exposed the EU to increasing humanitarian costs, particularly with the refugee crisis.

Moreover, resilience approach does not seem to end the refugees' suffering at the host countries or pushing them to stay where they are. Jordan, for instance, has kept a relatively open approach, even the normal citizens welcomed refugees, but its population has become gradually disapproving their presence and criticizing the government's refugee policy. The economic downturn, which is deepening by the Covid pandemic, is making the refugees situation worse, their access to healthcare and education has decreased. Further, many Jordanians see those refugees as competitors for their resources., and despite of the EU-Jordan compact, refugees have limited access to the Jordanian labor market. Thus, there is a strong desire for the Syrians not to stay in Jordan [18].

In addition. this approach has opened the door for criticism from the international community. the EU's image, has been criticized for its strict policy in dealing with the refugees amid the 2015 immigrant crisis. As mentioned, the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon expressed in front of the Australian Parliament, in April,2016 that EU's policies negatively affect the obligation of member states under international humanitarian law and European law [26]. Hence, this approach, which the EU uses, as a compensation for its strict policy seems to be insufficient and the EU is required by the international community and the hosts to do more.

Jordan is not at a better position either, or probably worse. Though resilience considers a more workable-sustainable solution, the challenges for the country are tremendous. The economic social strains, and the criticism from within have started to challenge the social cohesion and the stability of the country. The critics were not only for the governments, but it has also reached the king, the institution of the throne. There was criticism of the king for being so generous with the refugees, at the expense of the citizens [18].

In addition, the country is incapable of fully makes its commitments under the EU-Jordan compact. It is not to say there are not progress for those refugees regarding education and their formal labor market access, but the challenges remain. In education, out of the 238,038 refugee children at school age, only 143,765 refugee children enrolled to formal education, while 92,399 Syrian refugee children are not [28]. for labor market access, the authorities have issued more work permits ,yet, refugees have limited access to the Jordanian labor market.

Still, accepting the fact that this approach is not flawless is essential. By doing so, they are trying to make it workable as much as possible. Jordan, realizes that its social cohesion and its stability is on the edge, thus, many initiatives aim to address this issue. In the field of education, for instance, several initiatives make disrupted social cohesion among the host communities their focus point. One of these initiatives is, Generations for Peace. It was founded in 2015, and is still in progress. This project is the result of cooperation between the UNICEF and the ministry of education in Jordan. It aims to address violence at schools and reduce

it. This is to be done by designing different after-school activities that bring Syrian and Jordanian students together [25].

Another way, which Jordan is using to decrease the competition and avoid the tension, is obliging aid organizations to target both refugees and host communities. According to the Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis, the registration of any project and the government's approval require targeting at least 30% vulnerable host (Jordanian) communities under the refugee pillar, and at least 30% refugees under the resilience [24].

Protecting those refugees and their health is never neglected by the government. Specially with covid 19, Jordan has shown exceptional leadership and solidarity in hosting refugees. The country is one of the world's first countries that started COVID-19 vaccinations for every UNHCR-registered- refugees including those Syrians. By this, the proportion of the refugees affected by Covid 19 remained low, at 1.6 percent in comparison with 3 percent for normal Jordan population [30].

Considering the EU -Jordan compact, Jordan is trying to utilize the refugees as a development asset. To translate this on the ground, the government has established almost 18 special economic zones to facilitate exporting goods to markets in the EU, under relaxed rules of origin, thus creating employment opportunities for Syrians and Jordanians [23].

Moreover, under this scheme, many Jordanian companies got benefits. Fifteen companies have joined it, contributing to increase Jordan exports to the EU with a total value of 56 million in 2019 Euro in comparison with 19.2 in 2016. In, addition, the government is working to encourage more small and medium enterprises (SME) to reap its benefits [23].

In addition, the country is working hard to compile with its commitment in regard of education and labor market access. In that regard, the compact has resulted in a considerable progress for the Syrian refugees. Considering these children's right of education, even prior to the compact, it has been a priority for the government. However, through this compact, Jordan is committed that every Syrian refugee child would be in school by 2016– 17, alongside a promised investment of \$97.6 million to have an additional 102 double shift schools [2]. Thus, the government worked to expand the use of double shift schools, with the first morning shift for the Jordanian student, and the afternoon shift attended mainly by the Syrian refugees' children. The result of such a work, as of April-June 2021, a total of 143,765 refugee children at school age were enrolled in public schools from the 238,038 constituting 60% of the whole registered education [28]. This can be seen as a considerable progress, in comparison with the period prior to the compact. In 2015, less than 45% of Syrian children (43,791 girls and 41,740 boys) were in schools.

There is also a progress regarding their labor market access. One of these progresses is related to work permits' fees. Prior to the compact, those refugees were put within the same category as labor migrants, who pay almost € 900 annually for a work permit. High fees, administration procedures alongside missing official documentation for those refugees resulted that only around 3,000 permits were issued to Syrians before [4]. However, Syrians are recently required to pay only JD10 (12 €) administration fees. Moreover, there is an annual increase in work permits issued for those refugees as of July 2018. This increase is due to the government's efforts of taking the needed steps to open formal employment for Syrians. While In 2017, 46,000 work permits were granted in sectors authorized for Syrian refugees, this figure has increased dramatically to become 239,024 as of June 2021 [22].

More importantly, the government realizes their long presence with a little possibility of returning back soon. Thus, integrating those refugees and turning them into a real development opportunity is crucial. For this reason, the 3RP response for the Syrian crisis is harmonized with another national policy, Vision 2025, which was launched in 2015. It aims to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth [24]. Taking more steps to make the compact workable makes the government on the right path to resolving the dilemma of resilience.

The EU, on the other side, is also working to resolve this dilemma. Considering the EU's vision about resilience and its characteristics can be read as a precursor for the EU framing refugees as an economic asset and a development opportunity for the refugee's hosting states. The EU-Jordan compact is a perfect embodiment for such a vision. By linking aids and the relaxation of trade regulations to the labor and education of those refugees, the EU, is not only creating development opportunities but also enhancing the possibility of self-reliance of those refugees.

One way the EU is using, to resolve the dilemma, is promoting Jordan's macro-economic stability. In that respect, the EU's contributions through its fiscal support, macro-economic assistances are crucial to reducing the Gross public debt which is stabilized at 91% of Jordan's GDP in 2021 [1].

Moreover the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), contribute to foster Jordan's economic resilience. The first bank helps improving the socio-economic infrastructure as well as private sector development. Acknowledging the challenges posed by the refugees made it increase its support after the EU-Jordan pact to become €2.14 Billion. Currently, there are almost 69 projects financed in different sectors including water, energy efficiency and support to SMEs [13].

Furthermore, the EIB's support for economic resilience in Jordan is part of the Economic Resilience Initiative. (ERI), established in 2016 to enhance the EU Southern Neighborhood and Western Balkans countries' ability to withstand

shocks and improve their long-term economic resilience. This initiative has financed varied projects in different fields. In the field of water and sanitation, for instance, in 2019, the EIB has signed the EUR 65 million financing agreement with the Jordanian government for the improvement of water supply systems in the “Deir Alla and Al-Karamah” in the Jordan valley. This project could benefit almost more than 85,000 people in the Jordan Valley [1].

In the energy sector, the ERI supports Jordan to have a green and sufficient energy. It aims to reduce the high energy bill of the Jordanian municipalities, especially those which host the Syrian refugees. In order to achieve this, one of the EIB's last loan provided €45 million to Cities and Villages Development Bank to support municipalities' investments in energy efficiency infrastructure. The funding is expected to decrease energy consumption by half which represents a significant energy savings [6].

Supporting small and medium enterprises (SME) and the private sector is the key for a lasting, inclusive and sustainable growth. For this reason, the EBI has funded or co-funded many projects supporting SMEs. One of these projects is Jordanian Action for Development of Enterprises' (JADE) which is a 3 years project that was launched in 2017. The project's goal is to support over 160 SMEs, startups and entrepreneurs and create new employment opportunities for Jordanians [20].

In addition, the Regional Trust Fund is making the EU's approach workable as much as possible. It contributes to realize sustainable development goals for those refugees. This fund supports 36 projects in Jordan different sectors; in the education sector, 99,314 girls & boys have access to primary education through it ; 72,145 Syrians and Jordanians have access to improved water services & infrastructure; 79,891 Syrians and Jordanians are benefiting from livelihoods & resilience support; 37,458 Syrians and Jordanians are benefiting from protection services; 144,015 Syrians and Jordanians have access to medical care & health services ; 1,309 young women and men have access to higher education or vocational training and 172,500 Syrians and Jordanians have access to social cohesion services [8].

Furthermore, resilience building of the host countries has been in line with improving the EU's potentials as a host and, not only as a donor. The 2015 migration crisis has underscored the necessity of better harmonization of asylum procedures and standards. While The common European asylum system (CEAS) puts common minimum standards for the treatment of asylum seekers, on ground, asylum seekers are not treated likewise and recognition rates differ among member states.

In consequence of this, many asylum seekers move within the EU searching for the best country to apply for asylum. This phenomenon is known as “asylum shopping”, which has been intensified by the migration crisis. This required

reforming the current asylum system. Thus, in 2016 and 2019, the Commission put forward its new legislative proposals, as part of a new pact on migration and asylum [12].

Both the security and safety of the member states and the asylum seekers are the targets of these new initiatives. They aim to replace the Dublin system with a new one that allocates asylum applications better between member states by means of a new solidarity mechanism. In addition, it implies that the EU is taking the international community's calls and criticism of its migration policy seriously, especially in regard of its restrictive measures which it applies after the migration crisis.

## CONCLUSION

The final conclusion is that resilience might be a dilemma for both Jordan and the EU, yet, both of them are trying to make it workable as much as possible. Moreover, they both even can make it more workable.

As for Jordan as a host, in order to get the full potentials of the relaxation of trade regulations scheme, more efforts to be done. This scheme has contributed to improving the Jordanian exports to the EU, especially in textiles and clothing industry. The Jordanian exports have increased through this scheme to be JD 59 million in 2019 from 19 million the year before, and the highest share of these exports are from this sector. For this reason, more efforts to be done including: raising the awareness of the business community about the scheme, especially outside the capital where these regions are out of many developmental schemes.

Secondly, Jordan has to identify and address the challenges businesses face in taking advantage of this scheme. Jordan is one of the safest havens in the region and this stability could be of great advantage to attract local and external investments, yet the high taxes make investors prefer other destination like Turkey and Egypt. Addressing this challenge would be of great interest to local investors and that would create more jobs for Jordanians.

As for the EU, it can improve its potentials as a host. While Jordan is the host of a very high share of refugees in comparison of the whole population with 6.4% of its population as refugees, the EU is hosting only 0.6 % of its population as refugees. Yet, probably as Jordan has utilized the refugees as a development asset, the EU also by hosting more refugees can utilize them as a development asset, especially, when considering the demographic structure for the EU's population and it needs for labor.

Finally, revising the EU's migration policy is never out of the EU's planning. Yet, more efforts are to be done to balance its humanitarian and political efforts. The region truly needs is a greater political engagement of the EU with the aim of

achieving a peaceful political resolution for the conflict and that would make resilience more workable in the region.

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