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Chapter 6

Engendering Insecurity: The EU Asylum Regime

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'Me tired France. Me tired Europe. Three years Europe. No life here – sleeping eating waiting nothing. Sleeping bridge, park. Eat street [mimes squatting, eating from bowl] *No life waiting fighting. Say leave Iran – go Afghanistan. Me go Afghanistan – no family Afghanistan. Family dead, family Iran. Two month Afghanistan – very bad. Me leave. Iran, go Turkey. Turkey five month prison.* [why did they put you in prison?] *For nothing, for nothing. Go Greece – boat. Greece very bad – police very bad. Go England – six month England – four month prison* [detention]. *Me angry, me fighting – 'okay, deport, deport'. Deport Greece. Come back France. Me Paris one year. Me tired. Me tired. Thinking, thinking. Go back Afghanistan. Finish. Dead. Better for me.'* (Afghan man, Paris 27 years old, speaking in English).

The European Union, a federation of 27 states bound together by an explicit commitment to liberal democratic values manifested in the requirement to sign up to the *Acquis*[i], has made an equally explicit commitment to offering some form of security to those in need of protection (Schuster 2003). The EU, according to Art. 3 of the Reform Treaty, 'shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime'. The promise of security is central and not just to the citizens of the EU. While it

is the duty of all states to protect their citizens, all EU Member States have also, by signing up to a range of international and domestic legal instruments, undertaken to protect non-citizens who are unable or, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of their country of nationality. Security is understood as freedom from threats to one's life and liberty and the capacity to enjoy one's human rights. The state is seen as key in protecting and in securing people, but in the context of asylum in Europe, human security functions 'as a biopolitical technology...wedded to the architecture of the territorial nation-state' (Duffield 2007:111) This technology not only does not protect, but maintains in a state of extreme insecurity, those humans who challenge the capacity of European nation-states to maintain their territorial integrity. This chapter explores the damage inflicted by liberal democratic states on non-citizens, painfully articulated by the young man above.

The EU Member States reserve to themselves the power to protect and secure, and to refuse to protect and secure, those seeking asylum. In this paper, the practice of nation-states in relation to the granting or withholding of security in the shape of papers or documents, and the benefits that come with them, should be understood as an example of the functioning of biopower, of 'techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations'(Foucault 1998:140). Based on whether or not and where biometric data, such as finger-prints, are to be found in European databases like Eurodac, young men in particular are maintained in a situation of physical need, subjugation and availability to the police in public spaces such as soup kitchens where they eat and the parks where they sleep. In this way, the state maintains control of a population that, while physically vulnerable, is also constructed as threatening. Elsewhere, I have considered the way in which these technologies of control are racialized (Schuster 2003a), but Maguire in this volume provides a fluent and powerful account of the place of finger-printing within the history of colonization and racialization.

While the concept of human security, in which the security, rights and freedom of the individual should take precedence over the state, is becoming, at least rhetorically, the dominant paradigm (Duffield, 2007), the story told here indicates that practically, perceptions of threat and risk to the state and its

citizenry trump the security needs of vulnerable 'others'. Over at least a decade now, numerous scholars have explored the concepts of biopower and biopolitics in relation to the control of mobile populations (Agamben 1998, 2000; Balibar 2004; Bigo 2001), but this chapter is less a contribution to that theoretical literature and more a reflection on the consequences of subjugating one small group of people to particular technologies of control embodied in EU law and practices. Here, security, or rather its absence, is seen from the perspective of those the EU Member States are seeking to control, to manage, in the interests of *state* security.

In 1999, the Member States made a commitment to the development of a common European asylum system based on "full and inclusive" application of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Commission 1999, see also Vedsted-Hansen 2005). However, the asylum regime currently in place is marked by a narrow and exclusive interpretation of the Convention, one designed to keep those eligible to make a claim to the absolute minimum and to maintain those seeking the protection of the Convention in a state of *insecurity* for as long as possible, in order to facilitate their removal to another state or to their country of origin, and to deter others from seeking its protection. It does this through two instruments in particular – Dublin II and Eurodac (see below). Yet those most in need are at least as likely to be affected as those the EU believes to be 'bogus' asylum seekers. There is no recognition of the two key realities; that it is conditions in the countries of origin that drive up the numbers (Castles, Crawley & Loughna 2002), and that so long as some continue to win the lottery that is European refugee status, others will continue to play in the hope that one day they too will find a place in which to construct a secure future for themselves and their families.

Using the experiences of a group of Afghan migrants in Paris who have travelled overland through a number of countries, this chapter argues that in order to evade legal and moral responsibility for providing protection to those in need, EU Member States endeavour to maintain asylum seekers in a state of legal insecurity, which in turn creates the kind of physical and psychological insecurity expressed in the words at the beginning of this chapter. The two instruments that do most to maintain new arrivals in

this state of insecurity and anxiety are Dublin II and Eurodac (Schuster 2011), the mechanisms used by Member States to avoid a 'full and inclusive' application of the Refugee Convention. Eurodac is a European database storing the fingerprints of asylum seekers, 'making legible certain populations, fixing their identities and their movements' (Maguire, in this volume), while Dublin II is the regulation that identifies the country responsible for examining a claim for asylum, usually the first 'safe' country entered by someone claiming protection. This regulation is used by European Member States to evade responsibility for processing claims by pushing those in their territories back to the first 'safe' countries of arrival. Dublin II keeps asylum seekers in a state of insecurity, not knowing whether their claim will be examined and depriving them of the minimal bundle of rights available to those who are allowed to make a claim (such as accommodation, and access to some minimal allowance – if not to the right to work and control one's environment). The young Afghan men[ii] referred to here were at the time of writing in Paris and 'sous Dublin' – that is, the French state was seeking to return them to another Member State using Dublin II and Eurodac. Some remain in this limbo state for many months, unsure of what will become of them (Schuster 2011). By the time they arrive in Paris, they will have already crossed a number of countries in their search for security, and this chapter traces their experiences in these countries and the insecurity that drives them onwards. One of the most significant sources of insecurity is the constant threat of deportation (Chimienti and Acherman 2006), a threat that affects those without any resident status as well as those who have a precarious status such as asylum seeker, or, more particularly, asylum seekers 'sous Dublin'.

The testimonies and insights are drawn from the experience of the author working over a period of about 18 months as a volunteer with the *Collectif de soutien des exiles du 10eme*[iii], a group of activists that provides information and support to the Afghans who spend their time in and around the parks, canal and soup kitchens of the 10th arrondisement of Paris, trying to provide information and answer questions on the European regime. It is informed by many dozens of conversations[iv] in English, French, Greek and

very broken Dari with the young men about their journeys from Afghanistan, by the summaries of the conversations with other volunteers posted online each evening and by attendance at a number of meetings attended by activists, charities and local politicians. The chapter details the experiences of the Afghans inside the EU in order to illustrate how it is a combination of legal, physical and psychological insecurity that drives them to move from one Member State to another, and the ways in which Dublin II and Eurodac compound and trap them in that insecurity. Writing on the vulnerability of the undocumented and asylum seekers, Chimienti and Acherman (2006:67) note that while the precariousness of these groups has been documented in a general way, there is little written on specific challenges they face, such as '[p]auperization, instability, the breakdown of social structures and future prospects (Bourdieu 2001), and social exclusion (Castel 1995)'. This chapter is an attempt to document some of the specific challenges faced by a specific group of vulnerable people in the heart of Europe, and as such is a critique of EU asylum policy, which continues to privilege state over human security.

Comment [N1]: These are cited by Chimienti – I haven't read them myself Chimienti

Comment [N2]: not in bib a/a

To start near the beginning: Iran and Pakistan

The overwhelming majority of Afghans who have left their country in the last three decades (6.4 million according to UNHCR 2009) sought refuge first in Iran and Pakistan, and many of those currently present in Europe have spent time in those states. It is difficult to find accurate figures especially as insecurity in Afghanistan has led to repeated movements back and forward across the Afghan-Iranian and Afghan-Pakistan borders. The most recent census puts the number of Afghans in Pakistan at 1.8 million – even after returns totaling 3 million (UNHCR 2009), and in Iran at approximately 970,000 (UNHCR 2009, see also Kronenfeld 2008). The 2005 Amayesh (census) put the total number of registered Afghans living in Iran at just over one million (1,021,323) (cited in Abassi-Shavazi 2008). There were also

estimated to be 500,000 unregistered Afghans, including single labour migrants and, according to Abassi-Shavazi et al (2008), there may well have been a substantial number of Afghans in Iran who were neither documented nor labour migrants. Until 1992, these refugees or *mohajerin* who had fled to Iran would be issued with 'Blue cards' which gave them permission to remain indefinitely[v]. Although initially supportive towards the Afghan refugees, who were allowed to look for work and accommodation and permitted 'access to healthcare, basic education and subsidized food on the same terms as Iranian citizens' (Harpviken et al, 2004), after the fall of Kabul in 1992, when Afghans fled again in large numbers to Iran, they were regarded as a burden who should return 'home' (IPS 2009). And instead of being treated equally, as Abassi et al put it, 'policies which differentiate non-nationals from nationals shape the opportunities and experiences of second-generation Afghans in Iran' (Abassi-Shavazi et al 2008:4)[vi] – in other words, whatever papers or status Afghans have, unless they have the security provided by Iranian citizenship they remain vulnerable to changes in law and policy.

Since 1992, when a series of mass deportations was initiated, life in Iran has become much more insecure. The testimonies of Afghans in Paris who have lived in Iran bear out the earlier accounts in the briefing by Harpviken et al (2004) that they were no longer welcome (in spite of continuing demand for labour in the Iranian agricultural sector), that, without papers, they felt unprotected in the face of discrimination, crime and violence. As one Afghan who had arrived in Iran aged six months explained 'in Iran, anyone can stop you, take your money, beat you, you can do nothing. The police will not help you. Afghans have no rights there. Iran people are very bad to Afghans'. While competition for scarce accommodation in Paris may explain some of the tension, it seems this hostility was also at the root of fights that broke out in Paris between Afghans and Iranians waiting for the bus that would take the homeless to emergency shelters over the winter of 2009/10 when the numbers of Iranian asylum seekers increased sharply. As one Afghan who had lived in Isfahan, Iran, explained 'the Iranians think they are better than us. They treat us badly in Iran'. Nonetheless, there were mixed feelings. Some Afghans in

private conversations said they preferred the Iranians because they had lived among them for so many years, that having returned to Afghanistan recently they found they had no family there, no support network they could trust, and so their experiences of their 'Afghan home' had been very difficult, but they were not allowed to return to Iran.

Similar stories abound among those who had lived in Pakistan, with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reporting 'that the "push" to send refugees back home had acquired the dimensions of a "shove" by creating an environment of fear and persecution to force refugees out' (HCRP 2009) even though many of those living in these two countries were born or spent most of their lives there and even though segments of Pakistan's economy has largely become reliant on Afghan labour (Kronenfeld 2008:45)[vii]. Although the years after the Allied invasion saw large numbers of Afghans crossing back to Afghanistan, many with the help of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation schemes, others had settled and founded families in Pakistan. More significantly perhaps, as Kronenfeld (2008:49) points out '*the majority of Afghans currently residing in Pakistan were actually born there*, and may have little or no familiarity with Afghanistan. Yet these children of refugees are considered refugees themselves and do not have Pakistani citizenship'. In the words of an Afghan in Paris, 'I cannot go back to Afghanistan. I have no family there now. Without family I am dead'. This is a reference to a society that relies heavily on the extended family for security and support. Without a father, uncle or grandfather to guarantee a place in the community, to offer work and shelter, an Afghan stranger is treated with suspicion and will not find protection in Afghanistan. Kronenfeld (2008:55) writes that many Afghans who have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, return again, citing lack of shelter (57%), no means of making a livelihood (18%) and insecurity (18%) as factors preventing their long term re-integration.

Given such insecurity, it is perhaps surprising that so few Afghans make their way to Europe. Nonetheless, faced with an uncertain future in Iran and Pakistan, or forced return to a country of which all they know is that they would not have either physical or economic security there, a proportion of these

Afghans do seek some form of security further afield, though it is important to note that relatively speaking the number of Afghans who seek that security in Europe is tiny. According to the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Returns the number of Afghan refugees living in all of Europe is 500,000 (cited at IRIN 2009).

En route: Greece

Until relatively recently, the usual route for Afghans coming to Europe overland was through Iran and Turkey, with Van, Istanbul and Izmir in Turkey being important staging posts on the route (Yaghmaian 2005). Though most of those in Paris referred to the precariousness of life in Turkey and the brutality of the police there, they insist their problems began in earnest once they entered the European Union – that is, on the Greek side of the Turkish border. The asylum regime in Greece has been the target of considerable criticism by scholars (Karamanidou 2010, Sitaropoulos 2000, Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005), NGOs (AI 2008, Human Rights Watch 2008), other EU Member States, in particular Norway (IAB 2009, Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers 2009) and the European Commission (2007). The problems in Greece are multiple and occur at different levels, and can be understood in terms of different forms of insecurity: physical, legal, economic, social.

Signatories of the Geneva Convention are prohibited by Article 33 from forcibly returning or refouling people to 'a country in which the refugee has reason to fear persecution'. There is ample evidence both from NGOs (Amnesty International 2004; Human Rights Watch 2008; Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers 2009), journalists such as Sarah Prestianni[viii], scholars (Karamanidou 2010, Yaghmaian 2005) and from conversations with Afghans in Paris and that the Greek authorities engage in practices which amount to the refoulement of asylum seekers, that is, the return of people to

'the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' (Art. 33, 1951 Convention). Those caught by the Greek authorities on or near the land border with Turkey are liable to be returned across the border without being offered the opportunity to claim asylum. There is also evidence that the Turkish authorities have continued the refoulement, pushing some back into Iraq (Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers 2009).

Afghans in Paris told of being arrested on crossing the border between the two countries and thrown into jail near Alexandropoli, near the Turkish border, echoing similar stories gathered by Yaghmaian (2005), including the use of dogs to harass and bite the migrants. One young man told how he was picked up and kept with others in a large concrete room. After 20 days, when about 100 men had been detained, Greek 'commandos' came and moved them in groups of 10 onto a boat on a river (the Evros). On the Turkish side, they were forced off the boats at gunpoint, before it turned round and headed back to Greece. Sara Prestianni, an Italian photojournalist working with NGOs, and campaign groups on this subject confirmed the stories told in Paris, and added that before being returned Turkey the Afghans were stripped of anything that might betray their presence in Greece – including clothes with Greek labels or markings. In spite of this, the Turkish authorities sometimes insist on pushing back to Greece those they find on their side. In one case documented by UNHCR, Turkish police tried to force 18 men, including five recognized as refugees by UNHCR, across a river separating the two countries leading to the deaths of four of them by drowning (UNHCR 2008). Other young men in Paris confirmed reports of boats being returned to Turkish waters by the Greek coastguards, with their occupants being threatened with guns (Pro Asyl et al 2007). According to the Human Rights Watch Report (2008:38), the Turkish General Staff was cited as claiming 'that Greece "unlawfully deposited at our borders" nearly 12,000 third-country nationals between 2002 and 2007'. At this stage, these young men had no physical or legal security and were extremely vulnerable.

For those not returned to Turkey from Greece, there is still little hope of any form of legal security. Despite a doubling of the number of asylum applications in Greece from 12,267 in 2006 to 26,735 in 2007 (OFPRA 2008), these numbers are very low compared to other Member States, given that Greece is the first EU state reached by many potential asylum seekers, especially those coming from Afghanistan. From the accounts of the men in Paris, and from work by Karamanidou (2010) and Karamanidou and Schuster (2010), the primary explanation for the very low figures is the difficulty of making an asylum claim in Greece, though with the election of a new government in 2009 this may change (Karamanidou and Schuster 2010). All the Afghans spoken to in Paris on this subject (more than 20) in response to a question about claiming asylum in Greece, said without exception that they had not been allowed to do so. This was a recurring theme, brought up spontaneously by many others. In spite of the many thousands of Afghans transiting the country, only 2,287 claimed asylum in 2008. None were granted any form of status (UNHCR 2009) so none have any form of legal security. The Greek document most often seen in Paris is a single sheet of paper written in Greek that obliges the holder to quit Greek territory within 30 days. It offers no protection, no security, no access to rights of any kind. Without papers, potential asylum seekers in Greece are liable to harassment and to arrest by the police. Two of the Parisian Afghans in July 2009 reported having spent 3 months in a prison near Alexandropoli without charge, without trial, and without having been allowed out of their cell once – a cell they shared with 13 others. Almost all told of physical beatings, some retaining the scars. I accompanied one 18 year old to hospital to be treated for damage to his kidneys resulting from a beating by Greek police. When speaking of experiences on the way to Paris, young men would often interrupt each other to show off different injuries, sustained frequently as they struggled to resist giving their fingerprints – in one case a broken nose as the 17 year old's face was pushed onto a table. Broken fingers were a common souvenir.

However, it is not merely the physical abuse that persuades the Afghans to move deeper into Europe. Even where people have not been beaten and have managed to find work in Greece, make friends and learn the language, the lack of any secure legal status makes it difficult for people to build a life, to

earn enough money to send home or to get the education and training many seek. As a result, most Afghans headed for Patras, or more recently Igoumenitsa, the Greek ports from where the ferries for Italy depart. There they joined the squatters camps which until recently housed up to 3,000 migrants. In early summer 2009, the camps in Patras were again destroyed by the police as part of a crack down on undocumented migrants. Another young Afghan told me he had been so shocked by his experiences in Greece, which he 'thought was part of Europe', he almost gave up and went back to Iran, but thought he would try a little bit further on into Europe. Nonetheless, transit through Greece, especially if one has had one's fingerprints taken, means that access to legal security, and all the other forms of security attendant on having papers, is extremely difficult. Nearly all the Afghans in Paris have come through Greece, and many have had their fingerprints taken there, and so once they come to the attention of the authorities anywhere else in the EU, if their fingerprints are found in the Eurodac database, it is to Greece that they will be returned – whether or not they have applied, or been allowed to apply, for asylum in Greece.

Some security: Italy

Some Afghans in Paris had had to make a number of attempts to get to or through Italy, having been picked up on ferries or small boats and returned immediately to Greece. Among the young men in Paris, none appeared to have been returned to Greece under Dublin II, and it has not been possible to discover how many applications are made by Italy to return asylum seekers to its Eastern neighbor using EU law. Although, in a decision of the Council of State of 3 February 2009, three young Afghans had their expulsion to Greece ordered by the Ministry of Interior under the Dublin Regulation stopped (ordinance of 3 February 2009) [ix]. Most of the criticisms directed at Italy have related to the treatment of people arriving on the islands of Lampedusa and Sicily, or the mainland coast, who may be detained in

crowded and unsanitary conditions, and to the rapid mass deportations of people who have not been offered the opportunity to claim asylum to North African countries (Council of Europe 2009:3, 16). However, in 2008, for example, 1,732 Afghans did claim asylum in Italy, and 208 were granted refugee status and 969 a subsidiary status (UNHCR 2009), which is a very high recognition rate by comparison with Greece (see table 1 below).

Table 1 Recognition rates (%) of Afghan asylum seekers in selected EU MS 2008

	Aus.	Den.	Fin.	Fra.	Ger.	Gre.	Ita.	UK
Refugee status	44	4	0	36	29	0	12	8
Total positive decisions*	80	50	95	42	60	0	67	55

*Including subsidiary protection
Source: Adapted from UNHCR (2009)

One might expect that this status would offer Afghan refugees a degree of security, and to a certain extent it does. Those recognized as refugees are unlikely to be refouled and those who are rejected will not be returned in most cases but left to live as *clandestini*, without accommodation, the right to work or any support. Those who are awaiting a decision, may, if they are lucky, find accommodation in one of the *centri di accoglienza* (accommodation centres), which are similar to emergency shelters provided to the homeless – that is they open at 21.00, close their doors at 22.00, and 'guests' must leave before 08.00. These are distinct from the closed *Centri di identificazione ed espulsione (CIE)* (centres of identification and expulsion) where those who have been rejected, or who are in a fast-track process, are held awaiting deportation.

However, from August 2009, a steady stream of Afghans with Italian papers indicating that they had been granted refugee status in Italy began arriving in Paris – 12 on one day alone. When asked why they had left Italy, they responded because of the racism. They are frequently mistaken for Rom (perhaps

the most victimized population in Europe) and share the Rom experience of violence at the hands of fascists, racists and police (Council of Europe 2009). They could no longer bear the daily exposure to implicit and explicit hostility, such as people refusing to sit beside them on the bus or shouting at them in the street. However, they also explained that a significant factor was difficulty finding work, or accessing training or education. This they put down to a combination of discrimination and economic problems.

None had thought to apply through legal channels for permission to change residence, to move to another European Member State. Those I spoke to could not see that it was anyone's business where in Europe they lived or worked – they were not looking for anything from the state, just the chance to find secure accommodation and employment. However, while refugee status allows one to travel around Europe, it does not enable one to access the labour market, or economic or social support. As a result, those who have left Italy looking for economic security, the chance to build a life and start sending money to family in Afghanistan, often find themselves living on the streets in Paris, alongside those who have no papers, or only the most temporary residence permits.

Engendering security: France

In France, 42% of Afghans *who succeeded in making a claim for asylum* in 2008 were granted either refugee status or some form of temporary, renewable status (see table 1 above). However, most Afghans will have travelled through Greece and Italy and had their fingerprints taken en route. Once their fingerprints have been found in the Eurodac database, using the Dublin II regulation, France will apply to Greece to return them there without allowing them to make a claim for asylum. In 2006, France applied to return 2,647 people to other countries (all Member States) using Dublin II, succeeding in 849 cases (32%), including some Afghans (actual numbers not known, but some of those in Paris have been

returned to Greece under Dublin and have returned again to Paris). Being put 'under Dublin' should in theory offer some protection from arrest by the police, as those in this condition would normally be able to produce a paper demonstrating that they have made an attempt to claim asylum (i.e. they are not undocumented and trying to hide). However, among those in Paris, many had experienced regular harassment by the police, in particular during the night if sleeping rough when they would be woken to be questioned and, if they were lucky, moved on. The Afghans themselves would only rarely comment on such everyday occurrences[x], but occasionally emails among members of the Collective would circulate as volunteers living locally would become aware of a spike in the harassment, usually a prelude to attempts to deport.

Having applied for asylum in France, their fingerprints have been taken. Even if their fingerprints have been taken in Greece, they are not always found in Eurodac (Greece has an interest in not making these returns easy since this would only increase the pressure on their system!) and, even if found, Greece does not always respond to requests within the two months allowed. If people cannot be returned to a country they have transited, their claim must be examined in the country where they are, however, precariously, resident. However, by the time France takes responsibility, those who have been through this process are frequently bitterly disappointed by their treatment in France. At least two or three times a week, members of the *Collectif* would hear of Afghans 'under Dublin' being detained in *centres de retention* (detention centres). In theory, this should only happen towards the end of the process, to facilitate the transfer. In practice, it seems far more arbitrary. Although they are entitled to some form of accommodation, dozens of Afghans 'under Dublin' are sleeping rough in Paris, and members of the C*ollectif* wage a constant battle to insist that the local authorities find accommodation for them (often in B&Bs). This insecurity about their future, about whether they will be allowed to claim in France, about whether they will be granted recognition, places a heavy psychological burden on those who effectively find themselves in a legal limbo.

Afghans arriving in Paris for the first time are shocked by the reception conditions of the other Afghans in Paris, including those who have applied for asylum, and often decide within days to continue their journey, unable to believe that they would be unable to find asylum in other EU Member States. These young men want to pursue their journeys because France's inhospitality to Afghans is evident to the new arrivals, who are shocked and disheartened to find friends and fellow Afghans sleeping in parks, under canal bridges and in the streets, or accommodated with alcoholics and drug addicts in emergency hostels that resemble Bedlam. Young Afghans in Paris can spend many months outdoors. Winter 2008/9 saw temperatures drop to -10C, to which the City of Paris's response was the provision for minors of 25 beds in a hall. Each night there were approximately 60 Afghans, many without blankets or sleeping bags, some of whom would walk all night, afraid that the cold would kill them if they lay down. Those left outside include many who have applied for asylum, so that there is little incentive for new arrivals to follow suit. The consequences of living outdoors include lice, scabies, dental problems, depression and psychosis. On occasion, distressed young men have requested help for friends who have threatened suicide, who wander aimlessly at night, or who in two cases were found banging their heads against the stones of the bridge under which a group were sleeping. A psychologist from *Médécins Sans Frontiers* visits one of the parks frequented by the Afghans to try to offer support, but it is difficult to build relations of trust in these circumstances.

However, it is not just the lack of accommodation that pushes people to try elsewhere. Among the other push factors are the lack of training opportunities, the lack of work permits, and a growing anger and bitterness at their treatment. Of the group assisted by the *Collectif* , many wait a while before applying for asylum. In some cases they are consulting with friends in Paris, trying to work out whether they would be better off trying to stay in France or moving on. Some choose positively to apply for asylum in France, while others claim because there is nowhere else for them to go. This group includes those who have made it to Britain and been deported back to Afghanistan from where they have once again made their way west and northwards. Among this group there is an intense sense of frustration.

Many are not allowed to claim asylum in France because of Dublin II, but are also not allowed to claim asylum anywhere else, and they feel a sense of abandonment, caused by the French state's refusal to take responsibility for them, while at the same time refusing to allow these young men to take responsibility for themselves, to find work and accommodation.

The French state is particularly reluctant to take responsibility for providing, or allowing NGOs to provide, more than the scarcely adequate assistance currently available because of its experience in Calais with the Red Cross shelter at Sangatte[xi]. It is argued that as most of those, particularly minors, in Paris are only passing through, there is little point in investing time and effort in integrating them into the system. As the former director of France Terre d'Asile explained in conversation one evening 'our caseworkers spend hours, days trying to find a host family, a school, a social worker – and then pouf, they disappear – heading for England or Norway'. Against this, Jean Michel Centres of the *Collectif* argues that if these young people were taken in charge quickly, rather than just 'stored' in B&Bs, they would not want to continue their journeys. Local politicians are concerned that if more support is offered, this will encourage more people to come, and to stay for longer periods. Maintaining people in a situation of uncertainty, of destitution and distress, has become a weapon in the battle to deter new arrivals and encourage others to return (Schuster 2005) or to move on in the search for security.

The myth of elsewhere: Norway? UK?

In these circumstances, the UK and Scandinavian countries have taken on a mythical status. On the nightly patrols carried out by members of the *Collectif*, questions are regularly asked about where people should go next, about conditions elsewhere. The *Collectif* produces leaflets explaining the asylum processes in different EU states and in Norway, together with the recognition rates for Afghans and the

provisions for minors (see Parusel, this volume). The goal is to ensure that whatever decision people make, it is based on information that is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Volunteers do not advise on where to go, though they try to inform people about what to expect.

For minors, or those who hope to pass as minors, Norway in particular is seen as somewhere they will be safe. Those who have made it phone friends still en route and explain that they are quickly taken into care, placed with a family and in school. In Paris, I have met only one person who had returned from Norway, and that was to visit friends stuck in Paris. In 2008, Norway suspended returns to Greece, because of conditions there, though reinstated them for single men in 2009, but only after an individual examination of their case, when particular difficulties experienced in Greece may be taken into account. Families and those under 18 are not returned, but are cared for and integrated. This perhaps accounts for the increase in the number of applications to Norway in recent years (table 2), especially among those who are under 18 (1719 in 2009, 579 in 2008). Though not a member of the EU, Norway has signed up to the Dublin Regulation and has access to Eurodac.

Table 2

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Applications from Afghans	326	603	786	2032	1059	466	224	234	1363	3871

Source: Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (www.udi.no)

Others remain determined to make it to England. Those who have families there tell of successful businesses and of educational opportunities, and believe they will be among the lucky ones. Those who are in Paris having been returned from the UK under Dublin II, or caught on the Channel ferries, or having been returned by the UK to Greece or Afghanistan, still speak of better treatment in the UK. In part this is because the Afghans compare British police favourably to French, Italian and Greek police, in

part it is because they were accommodated until they were deported, so were not left to sleep in the streets. The impact of a lack of accommodation, especially in winter, should not be underestimated. The sense of vulnerability and insecurity felt among those forced to sleep in the open wears people down very quickly both physically and psychologically.

Among this group of Paris Afghans are those who understand that they have no hope of asylum in the UK, and that they risk deportation to Afghanistan, but they make the calculation that at least in the UK they will be able to find work (even if it is in the underground economy) and support from their community. Even if one does not have papers oneself, access to a support network that includes those that do can provide some security. A bed, familiar food, advice and information (however partial) in one's own language and above all work, make it seem a risk worth taking, even though there is a far greater chance of being expelled from the UK than from France to Afghanistan. These Afghans are engaged in a calculation about how to maximize a complex understanding of security – trading legal security against psychological and/or economic insecurity.

Conclusion

Having experienced difficulties in each country along their route, the Afghans continue their journey, hoping the next place will be better, believing that it cannot be worse. Above all what drives asylum seekers from one European Member State to another is lack of security, especially legal security, as it is this that furnishes people with the economic and social rights they need to be able to build their lives. But legal status alone is not sufficient. These young people, even those with papers of some kind, have frequently spent months (and occasionally years) sleeping on the streets of European cities, vulnerable to harassment and violence, their lives at constant risk. Without accommodation, attending

language classes and finding work is almost impossible. Many do find security, are recognised as refugees and allowed to remain. Others find their disappointment growing, and grow more bitter. The use of EU legal instruments such as the Dublin regulation and Eurodac by EU Member States to avoid their responsibilities to a vulnerable population inflicts more damage on this group.

However, while the costs are borne most cruelly by those like the young man cited at the beginning, there are also costs to European societies. In the tradeoff between security, as a value and policy goal, and other key values, such as freedom or justice, (Karyotis this volume) the freedom and justice of European citizens are also compromised. The link between some of the security measures and instruments discussed throughout the chapters in this volume and the attendant racism and discrimination that infects societies employing them have been explored elsewhere (Schuster 2003, Maguire this volume). One is reminded of the words of Hannah Arendt (1973:269) 'those whom the persecutor had singled out as the scum of the earth - Jews, Trotskyites etc - actually were received as the scum of the earth everywhere', such that in our pursuit of 'our' security, we Europeans are then implicated in the abuses committed far from our territories.

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[i] The body of EU law already in existence (already 'acquired') that would-be Member States (MS) must put in place before accession to the Union.

[ii] The Afghans referred to here are exclusively men, because the majority of young Afghans sleeping rough in Paris and assisted by the *Collectif* are men. Although we occasionally encountered women as family groups, families could be found accommodation very quickly (though this was often in very cheap hotels far outside Paris on industrial estates with no cooking facilities and no shops or public transport nearby).

[iii] See http://www.exiles10.org/

[iv] These were conversations that took place in the course of 'patrols' by the collective in the evening with those queuing at Salvation Army soup kitchens, as questions were asked about conditions in France and elsewhere in Europe. They were not interviews conducted for a research project, though I explained that I was a *Ma'alem* (teacher) and a writer and would write about what I saw..

[v] For an analysis of Iran's relationship with Afghanistan and its attempt to create greater security for itself through using the Mohajedin as an indigenous Afghan force sympathetic to Iran, see Milani (2008).

[vi] They go on to point out that 'Second-generation Afghans in Iran have been raised in an arguably more liberal social and religious environment, and exposed to values, attitudes and practices that are different from those of their parents'. More research is required on this aspect of exile.

[vii] Kronenfeld extrapolates from Pakistan government figures that at least 55% of Afghan refugees under 18 were born in Pakistan (2008: 49).

[viii] Interviewed in Paris, 11 July 2009 – see http://www.flickr.com/photos/saraprestianni/page4/

[ix] 'Il Consiglio di Stato ha dunque bloccato l'iniziativa del Ministero dell'Interno di allontanamento dall'Italia dei giovani afgani, in ragione delle note, ripetute ed ingiustificabili violazioni della normativa comunitaria e dei diritti umani perpetrate in Grecia' (available http://www.meltingpot.org/articolo14033.html)

[x] Most recently, two Afghans who are volunteers with the homeless charity *Restos du Coeur* explained that they were unable to make their regular shifts because they had been stopped on their way to the soup kitchen and held in a police station for 2.5 and 4 hours.

[xi] Sangatte has become something of a bogeyman – an article in *L'Express* (7/8/2008) on the park and the Afghans opened with the line 'Sangatte in the heart of Paris...'