

Britain must take in refugee children stranded between Turkey and Greece, campaigners demand



A child walks next to tents in a migrant camp set up near the Turkish-Greek border in Pazarkule, Edirne region

CAMPAIGNERS are demanding that the British government follow the example of other EU countries and urgently take in child refugees suffering in deplorable conditions in Greek camps.

Last night, Germany, Portugal, France, Luxembourg, and Finland agreed to receive 1,500 unaccompanied child minors in response to a plea from the EU to member states.

It follows a severe deterioration of the situation in Greece's refugee camps, which are facing unprecedented overcrowding and escalating violence.

Safe Passage — a group that works with child refugees in Europe — urged Prime Minister Boris Johnson today to heed the calls of the EU and Greek authorities.

Safe Passage CEO Beth Gardiner-Smith highlighted that Britain has allowed

fewer than 480 refugee children to enter under the Dubs scheme despite local councils offering homes to minors.

She told the Morning Star: "The government insists child refugees are safe in other European countries and don't need sanctuary here.

"But the children currently trapped on the Greek islands are not safe, they are in a living hell in camps ... where hunger and violence are escalating.

"Hoping to avoid being preyed upon, many children are sleeping in olive groves or on beaches, entirely exposed to the elements."

A petition set up by the group urging the government to take in minors from the camps had almost reached 10,000 by the time the Star went to press.

Migrant rights group Help Refugees has also joined Safe Passage's call on the government to let in child refugees.

"Children are living in horrific conditions, hungry, cold and afraid, and it is in Boris Johnson's power to bring them to safety," a Help Refugee spokesperson told the Morning Star.

"Our country has a great tradition of hospitality to those seeking sanctuary, going back to the Kindertransport and beyond: now is the time to show those values are alive and well in today's Britain."

Source:

<https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/britain-must-take-in-refugee-children-stranded-between-turkey-and-greece-campaigners-demand>

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