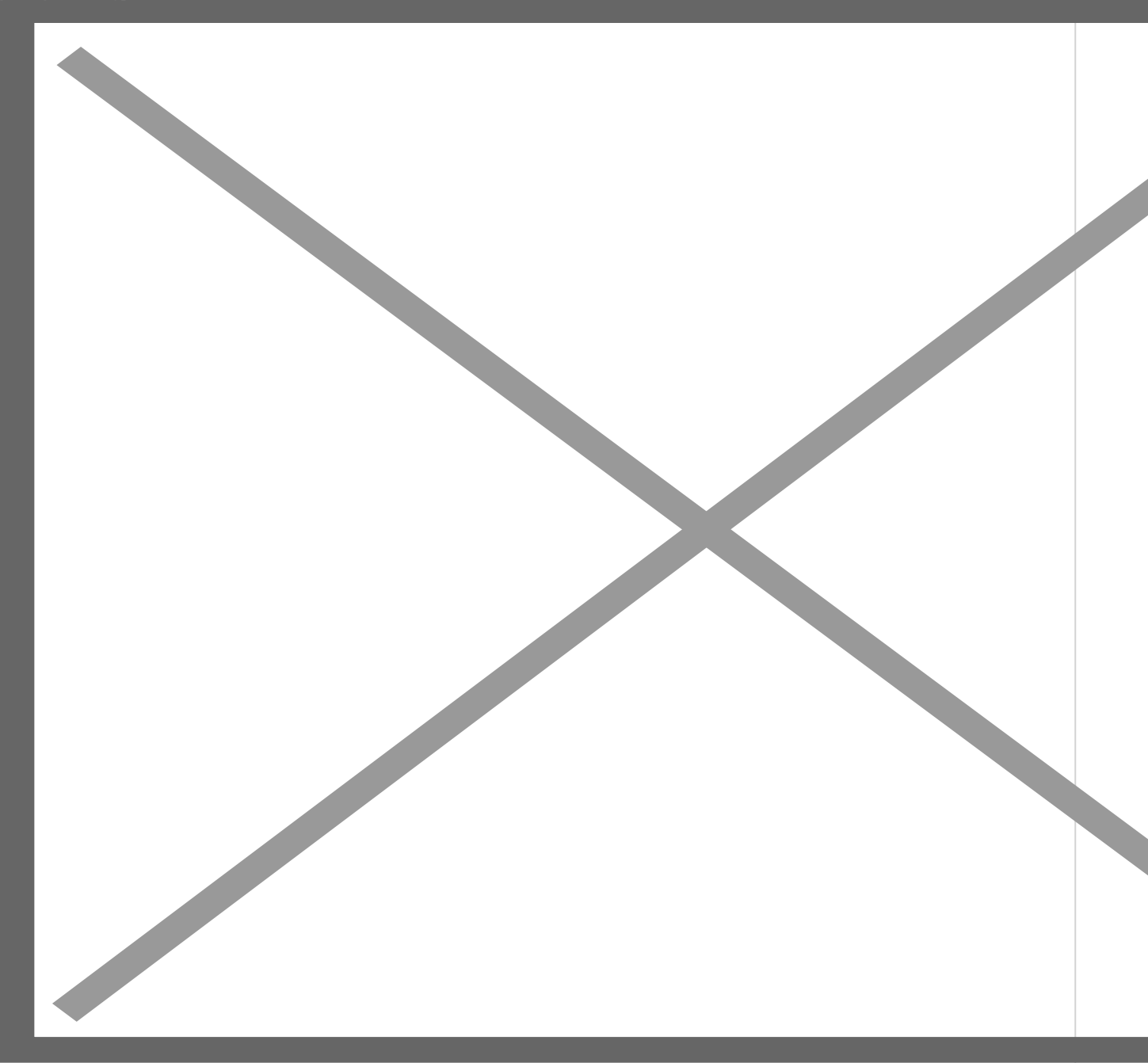


# *More than 17,000 refugees trapped on Greek islands*

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**Brussels, February 4 (RHC)-- European Union lawmakers describe conditions for thousands of refugees on five Greek islands as "appalling" and a shameful reflection on the bloc's values. EU member states are refusing to relocate these desperate people in defiance of international humanitarian law.**

Brussels, February 4 (RHC)-- European Union lawmakers describe conditions for thousands of refugees on five Greek islands as "appalling" and a shameful reflection on the bloc's values. EU member states are refusing to relocate these desperate people in defiance of international humanitarian law.

Seventeen thousand and five – that's the precise number of refugees currently barely surviving in awful conditions on the islands of Greece, apparently a proud member of the 27-nation EU. Legislators have been discussing the situation in the European Parliament, located in Brussels.

According to reports, there are not enough toilets or hot showers in the overcrowded camps. EU lawmakers say this is all the more appalling against the backdrop of a global pandemic. The parliament debate heard that 60 percent of the refugees have reported suicidal thoughts to doctors. On Lesbos alone there are 129 babies under the age of one. EU nations pledged to take in 5,145 refugees from the islands but just half that number have been relocated.

The argument has been made, the EU has a special responsibility in this regard because of the very destabilizing roles some of the bloc's countries have played in Africa and in the Middle East. The shape of the current political landscape in the EU does not inject confidence that the bloc's asylum policy will change any time soon, according to experts.

Lawmakers say EU governments are using the pandemic as a reason to extricate themselves from their fundamental human rights responsibilities.

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