

# *Germany to Spend ?10 Billion on Refugees*

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Berlin, September 7 (RHC)-- Financial costs for care of asylum seekers in Germany could be some ?10 billion (\$11 billion) by the end of the current year, four times what Berlin spent taking care of refugees last year.

According to a Sunday report by the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAS), the cost could reach anywhere between ?9 and ?10.5 billion based on the cost estimates obtained from all administrative levels - federal, regional and local- across the country.

Germany's Federal Statistics Office has said that ?2.4 billion were spent on looking after some 203,000 new asylum seekers who entered the country last year.

In July, a refugee summit held by the German Parliament budgeted ?5.6 billion for an expected 450,000 asylum applications while the recent influx of asylum seekers from the Middle East and Africa exceeded largely the initial estimate and some 800,000 refugees are expected to enter the country by the end of December.

But despite the financial challenges and criticisms of a decision to allow more refugees to enter the country, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she was still aiming to balance the country's budget.

According to UN estimates, so far this year 300,000 people have left the Middle East and Africa for a better life in Europe, particularly Germany.

The world body figures show that in 2015 alone, about 2,600 migrants lost their lives by taking the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean to EU shores in smuggler boats. Most of the refugees are fleeing hardships inflicted on them and their families in conflicts, blamed by many on the U.S.-led military interventions in countries like Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

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