

# POPE CHIDES EUROPE FOR "INDIFFERENCE" DURING REFUGEE CAMP VISIT

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During his visit to the Mavrovouni refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos—his second one in five years—Pope Francis had stern words for Europe on Sunday. Blasting the continent for its “indifference” and “self-interest” that “condemns to death those on the fringes,” he went on to plead, “Please, let us stop this shipwreck of civilization!” The pope lamented that in the five years since his 2016 visit, little had changed, *Reuters* [reports](#).

In 2015, Lesbos was at the very heart of a massive wave of migration to Europe. More than one million people, many fleeing war in Iraq and Syria, crossed from Turkey into Greece during 2015 and 2016, with Lesbos as the busiest crossing point. While Lesbos hasn’t experienced the same influx of people since those years, concerns about (mass) migration in European countries have not abated, and in fact have been exacerbated by attempted crossings on the EU’s Polish border with Belarus.

Greece responded to the crisis by constructing a steel wall along a section of the Greek-Turkish land border. They have also implemented a policy of intercepting boats transporting migrants from Turkey. Allegations that it is carrying out summary deportations of migrants reaching Greek territory have been denied, but according to the [AP](#), human rights groups say numerous such pushbacks have occurred.