

Stockholm, 19 March 2009

## 'Refugees at our doorstep: - Why are they here?'

### UNHCR launches article competition for journalism students

*"Illegal migrants from Africa arrive on the shores of Europe, many are feared drowned"*. A news headline of our times. But are they all 'illegal migrants'? Is it not possible that some of them flee war and persecution? That among them there are asylum seekers? Does the media reporting simply echo political and public attitudes or do the journalists lack knowledge of the complex phenomenon called 'mixed migration'?

UNHCR - together with leading newspapers, non-governmental partners, and universities - is this week launching an article competition for journalism students in the Baltic and Nordic countries.

"Refugees at our doorstep – Why are they here?" is the competition theme, and the journalism students can choose a local, national or European focus for their articles.

- Through this competition we hope to build a pool of future journalists that are interested in the field of asylum and refugee matters, and who will be able to cover such issues in an informed and precise manner, says Hanne Mathisen, spokesperson for UNHCR in the Baltic and Nordic countries.

For journalists-to-be, the competition is an excellent opportunity to get published in a leading national newspaper\* about this widely debated and often politicised topic.

- One overall Baltic-Nordic winner will be invited by UNHCR to join in a press trip to a major refugee operation later this year – a golden opportunity to work alongside and learn from experienced journalists, says Hanne Mathisen.

The deadline for submitting articles is 8 May 2009.

For more information, please visit the competition website at [www.whyaretheyhere.org](http://www.whyaretheyhere.org).

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**\*Collaborating newspapers in the Nordics:**

Aftenposten, Helsingin Sanomat, Morgunbladid, Politiken, Svenska Dagbladet

**\*Collaborating newspapers in the Baltics:**

Diena, Eesti Päevaleht, Lietuvos Rytas

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