

Italian Refugee Crises

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What is the issue?

- On June 10, 2018, Italy's new Interior Minister **Matteo Salvini**, barred the rescue ship **Aquarius** from docking at Italian ports (Kington).



(Image via Wikimedia Commons)

Why it is a problem?

- According to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, more than 1,700 migrants have died trying to cross to Europe in 2018.
- **Dilemma:**
 - humanitarian rescue
 - social instability



Image via independent.co.uk

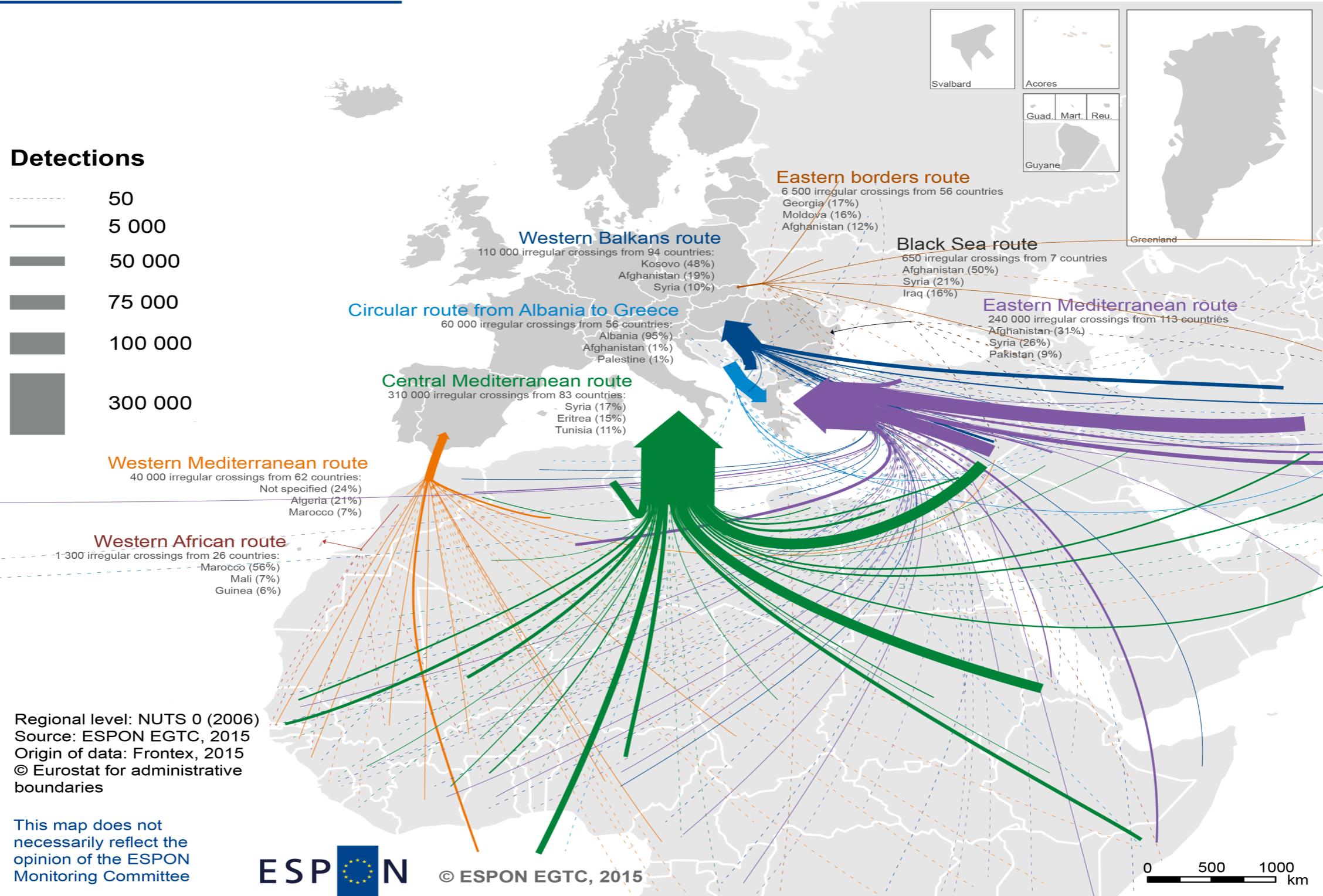
Cause 1: African Political Turmoils

- Fleeing from **wars** and seeking better **economic opportunities**
- **6 million** Syrian refugees after 7 years of civil war (McKenna)
- **Libya** - a popular jumping-off point for migrants.
- Rampant **human trafficking** and **adverse weather conditions**



Image via NATO

Map 1 - Main irregular border crossing routes by nationalities, 2010 - 2015 (Q1)



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European Migrant Crisis 2015



Top Countries of Origin



Quellen:

- Asylum applicants: eurostat dataset migr_asyappctzm
- Migratory routes: FRONTEX Migratory Routes Map
- Population data: eurostat dataset tps00001

Data extraction date was 12 Sept. 2015

Number of Refugees



Migratory Routes



Other important entry points are European airports where people are arriving in possession of valid travel documents but do not return to their countries when they have overstayed.



Number of asylum applicants per month



Cause 2: Italy's Geographical Position

- Italy is one of the primary countries of first arrival for refugees.
- According to the International Organization for Migration, 114,287 migrants have reached European shores, of which 85% are Italian arrivals in 2017.

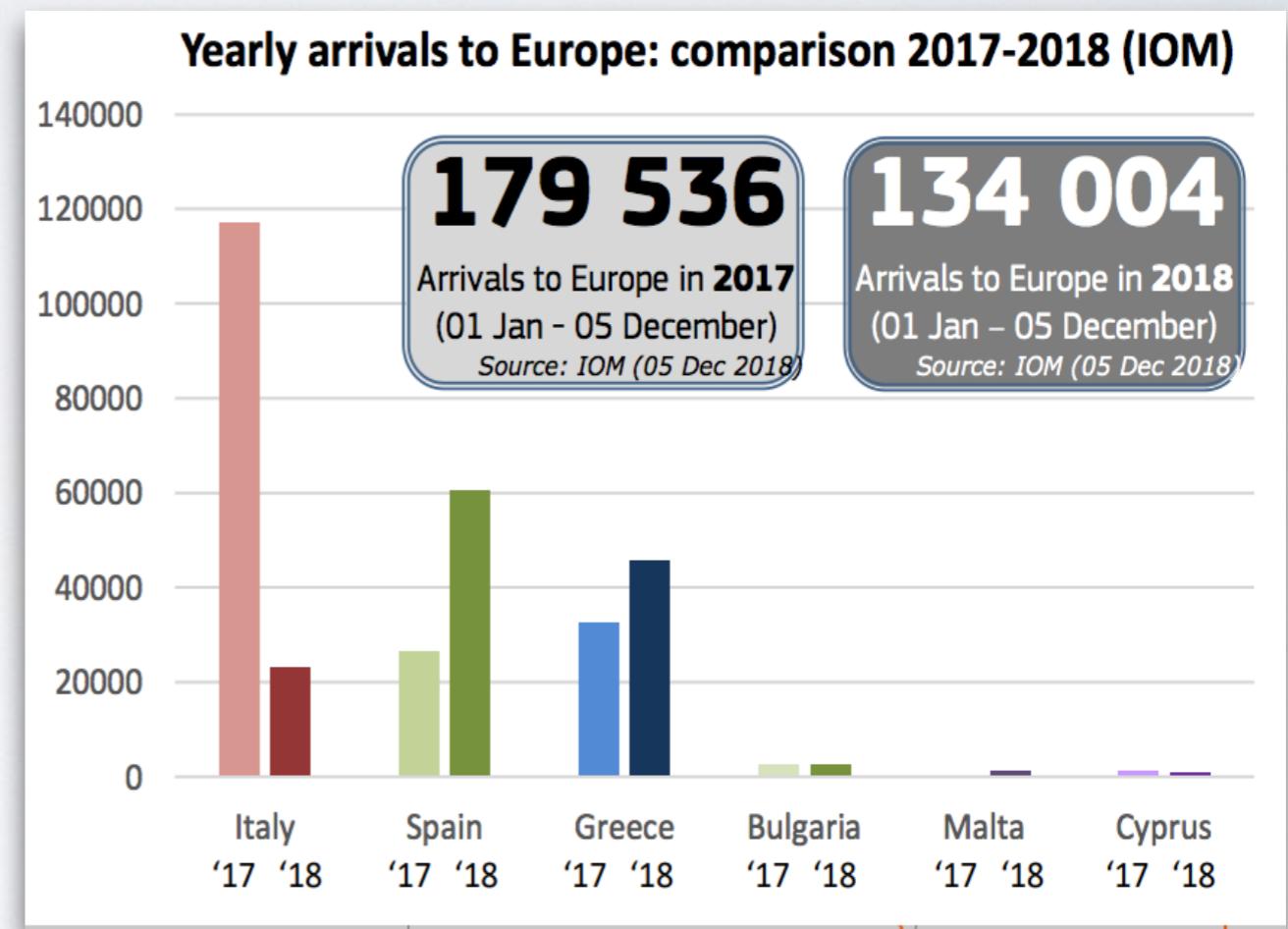


Image via UN dispatch

Cause 2: Italy's Geographical Position

- The Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development, “places legal responsibility on migrants and asylum applications”, rendering many migrants stuck in Italy (McQuirk).



Image via spectator.com

Cause 3: Lack of Support

- Germany and the Netherlands: “they have done enough”
- Hungary and Poland : “flatly reject all compulsory refugee distribution schemes” (Henley)



Image via Pinterest.com

International Criticisms:

- The politics professor Flavio Vassallo pointed out that the Italian government was disregarding International law and the European Convention on Human Rights (Brabant).
- Amnesty International heavily criticized the initiative, saying that repatriating the refugees would “expose [them] to horrific abuse” (Fox).



Image via Amnesty International

Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

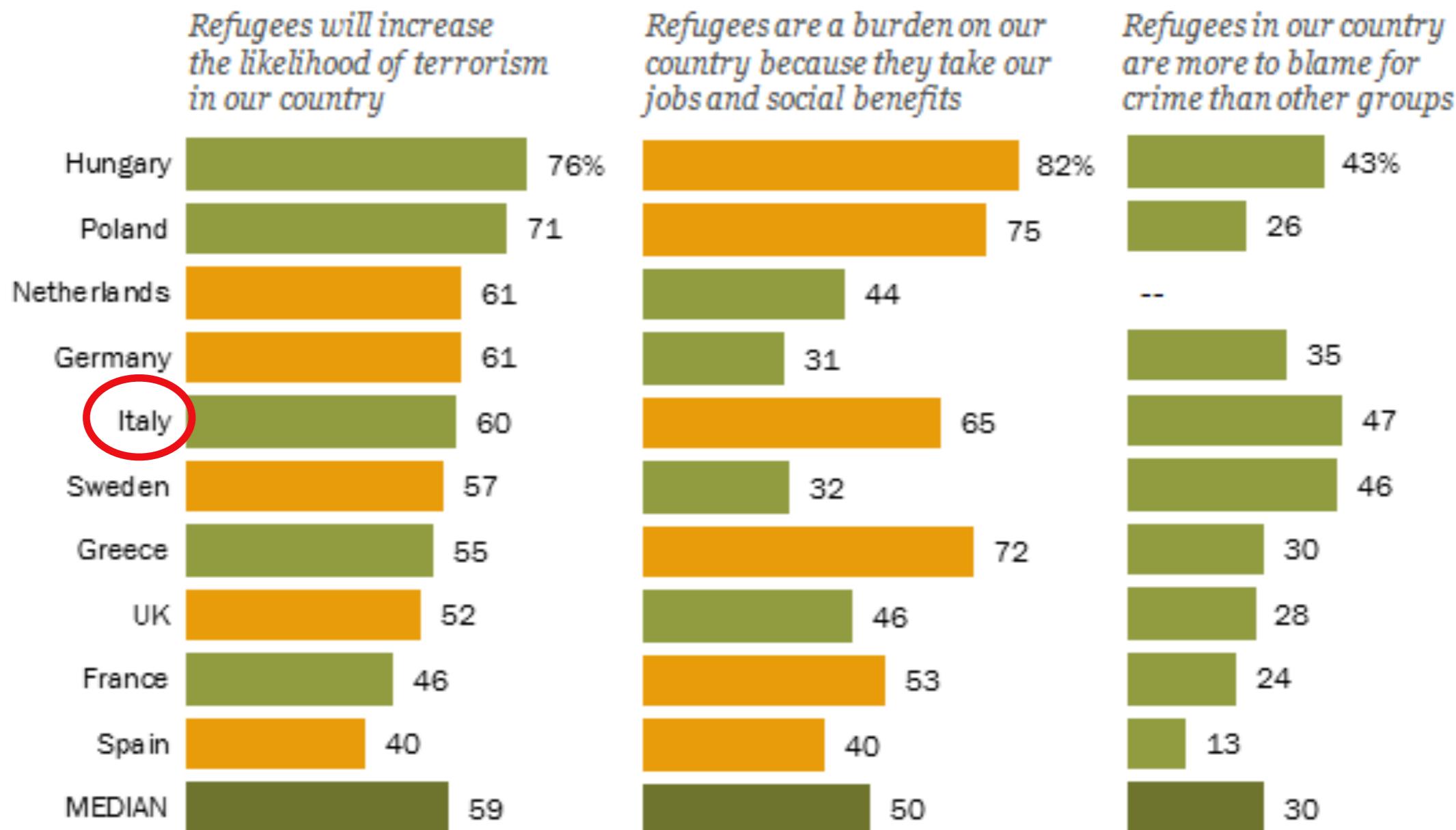
- A research conducted by the Pew Research Centre in 2016 showed that 60% of Italians believed that inflows of refugees will increase domestic terrorism, much higher than the European median (McQuirk).



‘Stop immigration, let’s defend the nation’
Image via Guardian

Many Europeans concerned with security, economic repercussions of refugee crisis

Top choice



Note: Netherlands excluded on question about crime (Q51b) due to administrative error.

Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey. Q51a-c.

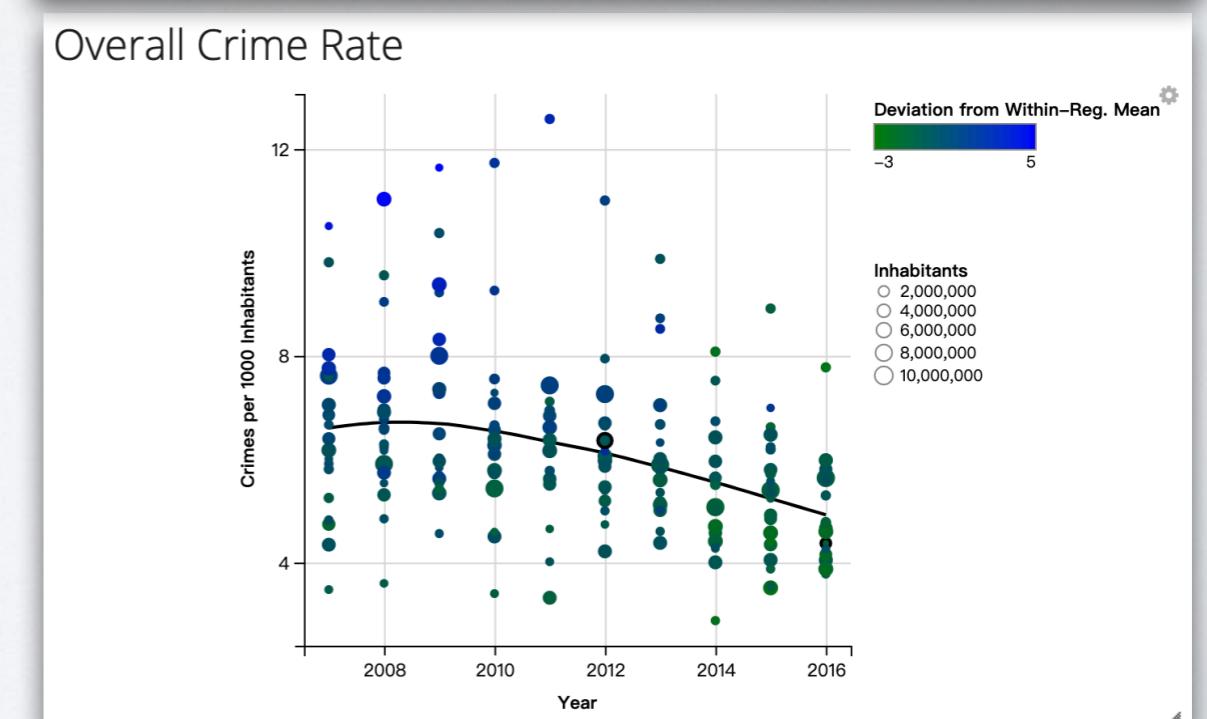
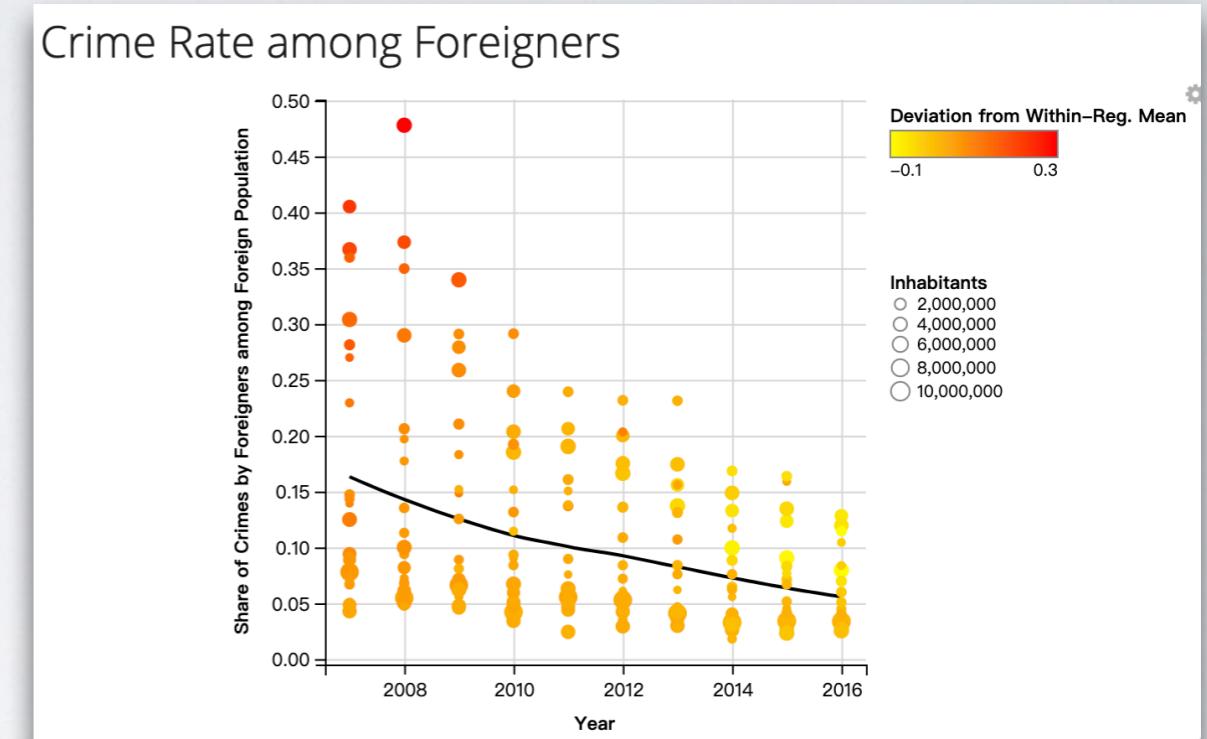
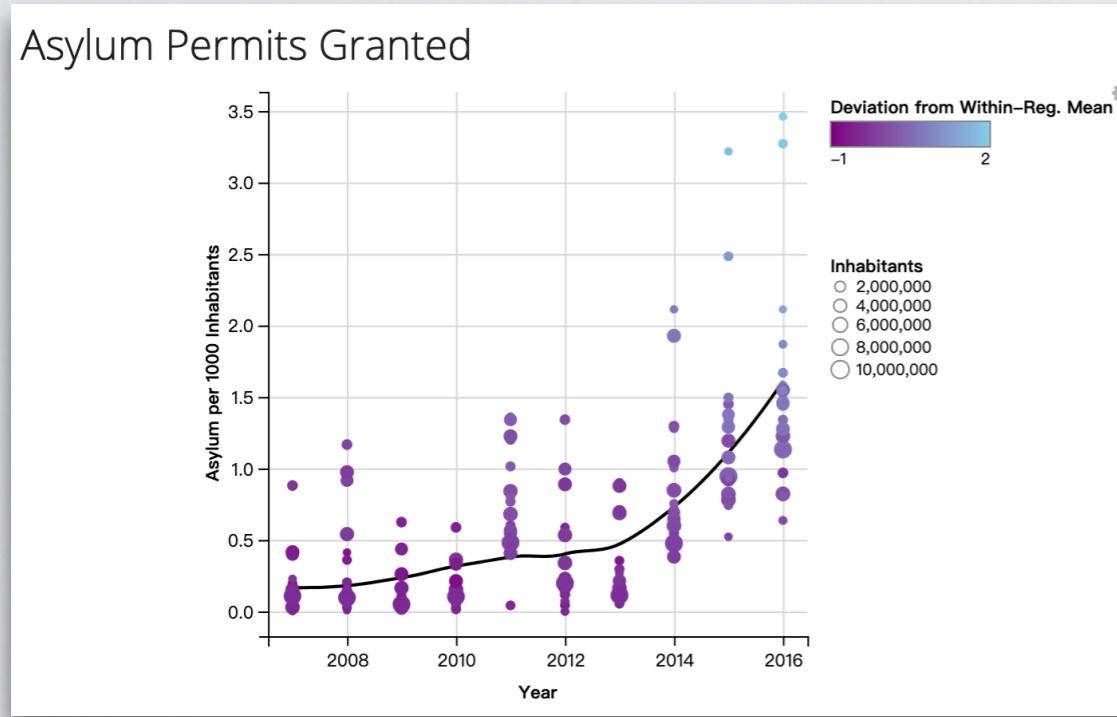
Violence

- Konate Bouyogui, a 22-year-old Malian with legal residency, was struck by bullets fired by two Italian boys in June, 2018 (Tondo).



Image via Guardian

Whether the immigrants actually generated more crime in Italy?



Source: the London School of Economics and Political Science

Data: Italian National Institute of Statistics

Positive Effects:

- Studies by Prof. Alexander Betts, director of Oxford's Refugee Studies Centre, emphasize that refugees are able to boost the country's GDP if they are “given enough work opportunities, access to capital, and education” (Aimar).
- A good example: the dying small Sicilian village of Sutera



Image via southeusummit.com

Positive Effects:

- Refugees could alleviate the lack of labour.
- The proportion of old people in Italy is forecasted to soar from 28.8% in 2015 to 50.3% by the middle of the century (Reynolds).’
- About 50% of refugees are between 18 and 34, with one third are below 18 (Reynolds).



Image via FocusEconomics.com

Potential Solution 1: Temporary Visas

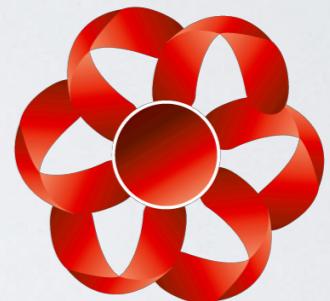
- Italian officials suggested a proposal to grant refugees temporary visas “to travel on to other countries in the EU if a more equitable arrangement between EU member states was not reached” (Srour). (Srour).



Potential Solution 2: Provide More Opportunities

- Currently, the Italian government's policies require the illegal refugees to "do nothing but live off the welfare system" (McQuirk).
- Germany and Sweden have set up service centers for refugees to help them learn local languages, get financial aid, and find job opportunities (Reynolds).

Refugee support



Potential Solution 3: Combat the Prevailing Xenophobia

- Instead of stirring up hatred towards the refugees, the government should inform citizens both the positive and negative effects brought by immigrants through the media.
- Refugees do not deserve the title of scapegoat for all the economic and social problems.



Image via thoughtco.com

Continuity and Change:

- 2017:
 - Italian Parliament passed a bill to “green-lighted Libya’s request for help”
 - also passed a “code of conduct” for NGOs to limit their rescue missions in the Mediterranean Sea (Fox).
- 2018:
 - Blocked the refugees directly at the sea shores.
- Italy has been clamoring for EU solidarity.

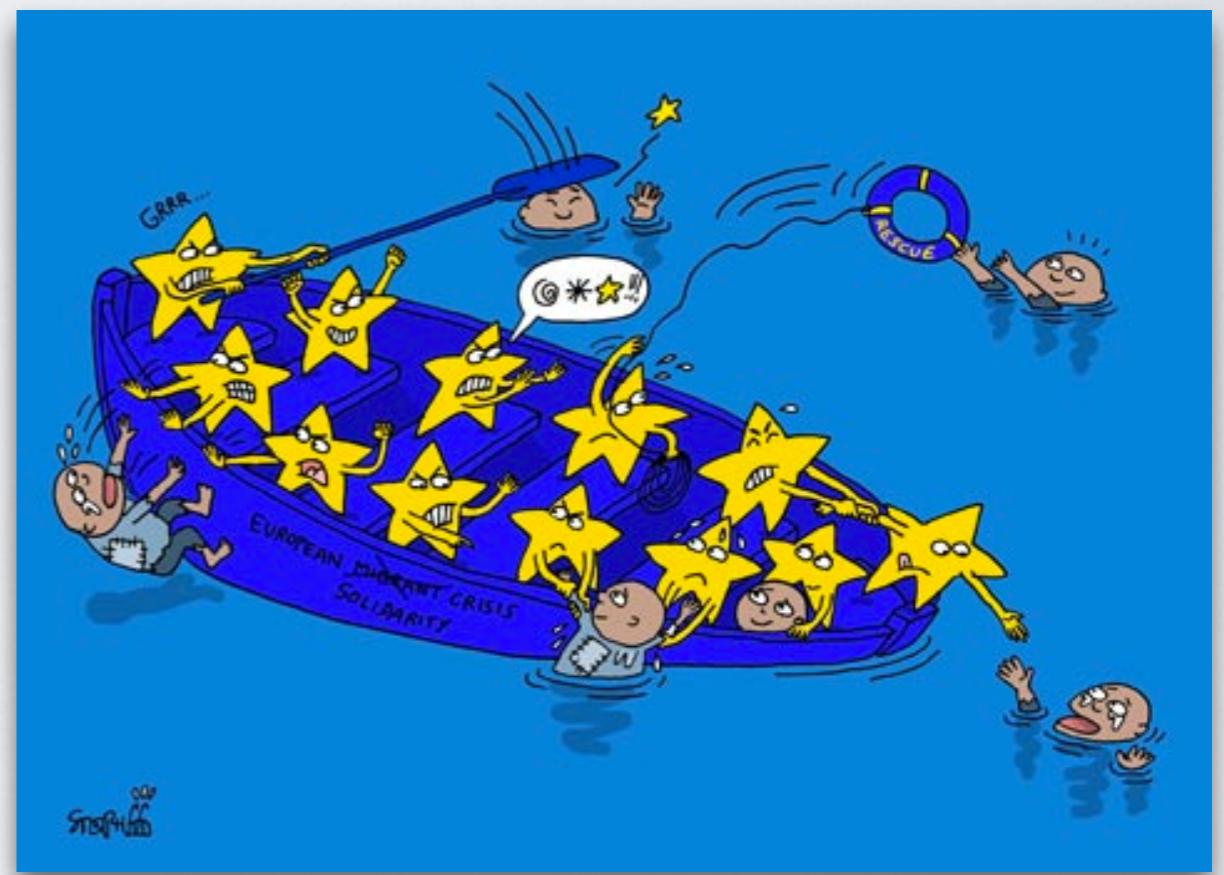


Image via Kuwait Times news

Recommended Action Plan:

- The most effective solution to the refugee crises is to form a set of rigorous asylum rules that apply to every country in the European Union.
- Penalizing non-cooperation and rewarding countries who cooperate can consolidate the European solidarity.



Image via paulowensblog



Refugee support



Citation

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