Syrian Asylum Applications in the EU | Determining Factors

Introduction

There have been over 1.1 million asylum applications to European Union countries from Syrian refugees since 2011 as a result of the civil war. While it should be noted that the majority of refugees seek asylum in neighboring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon, the influx of refugees to Europe is significant because it ties into local political and economic crisis. This project uses the county as the spatial unit, and limits the scope to the 28 EU nations. The aim of the project is to see if a correlation exists between specific social, economic, or structural conditions and the country of asylum application.

Methodology

To create the flow map, data was obtained from 2014 Eurostat numbers on asylum application from Syrian citizens. The centroid of each EU county and Syria was determined in ArcGIS, and the longitude and latitude were calculated. Using the XY to Line tool, the flow lines were created using the number of applications as the weighted symbolization factor.
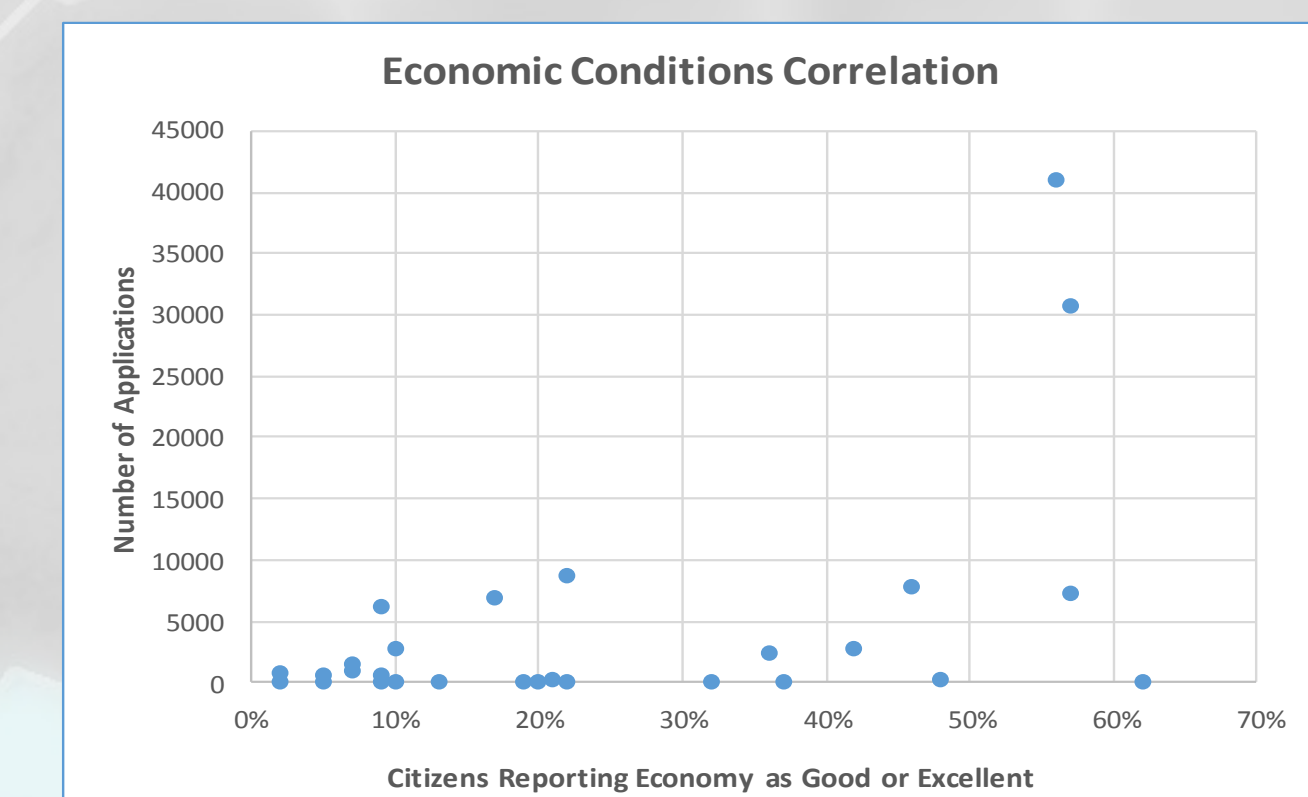
To create the factor maps, data was gathered from Gallup World Poll for each EU country on (1) If citizens of that county self-reported to helping a stranger in the past month; (2) If citizens of that county self-reported their home-town was welcoming to immigrants; (3) If citizens of that county self-reported 'excellent' or 'good' economic conditions; (4) unemployment rate. (5) The last variable considered the acceptance rate and used data from Eurostat on asylum application and acceptance numbers.

Using SPSS, the bivariate correlation tool ran a single-tailed statistical significance test to calculate the correlation coefficient and the P-value for each factor.

Asylum Applications

- 5 - 505
- 506 - 1510
- 1511 - 2845
- 2846 - 8790
- 8791 - 41100
- Syria
- EU Countries

Results & Limitations

All of the factor maps show a positive correlation between application numbers and the dependent variable, expect for Unemployment which shows a negative correlation.

Two factors were shown to have significant correlations. The Helpful to Strangers variable was found to be statistically significant ($P = .043$) and the Economic Conditions variable was found to be very statistically significant ($P = .003$). When controlled for country population, all correlations remained the same and the Economic Conditions factor remained very statistically significant ($P = .005$).

Economic Conditions Correlation

It should be noted that the polls from Gallop as are based on the opinions and self-reporting of citizens. Any potential causation relies on the assumption that the reputation of the county is relied back to asylum seekers.

Other limitations from the data include the time scope of data, which was limited to just 2014. This is of particular note for the acceptance rate, because some of the acceptances could reflect 2013 applications, due to the fact that the application process can take several months.
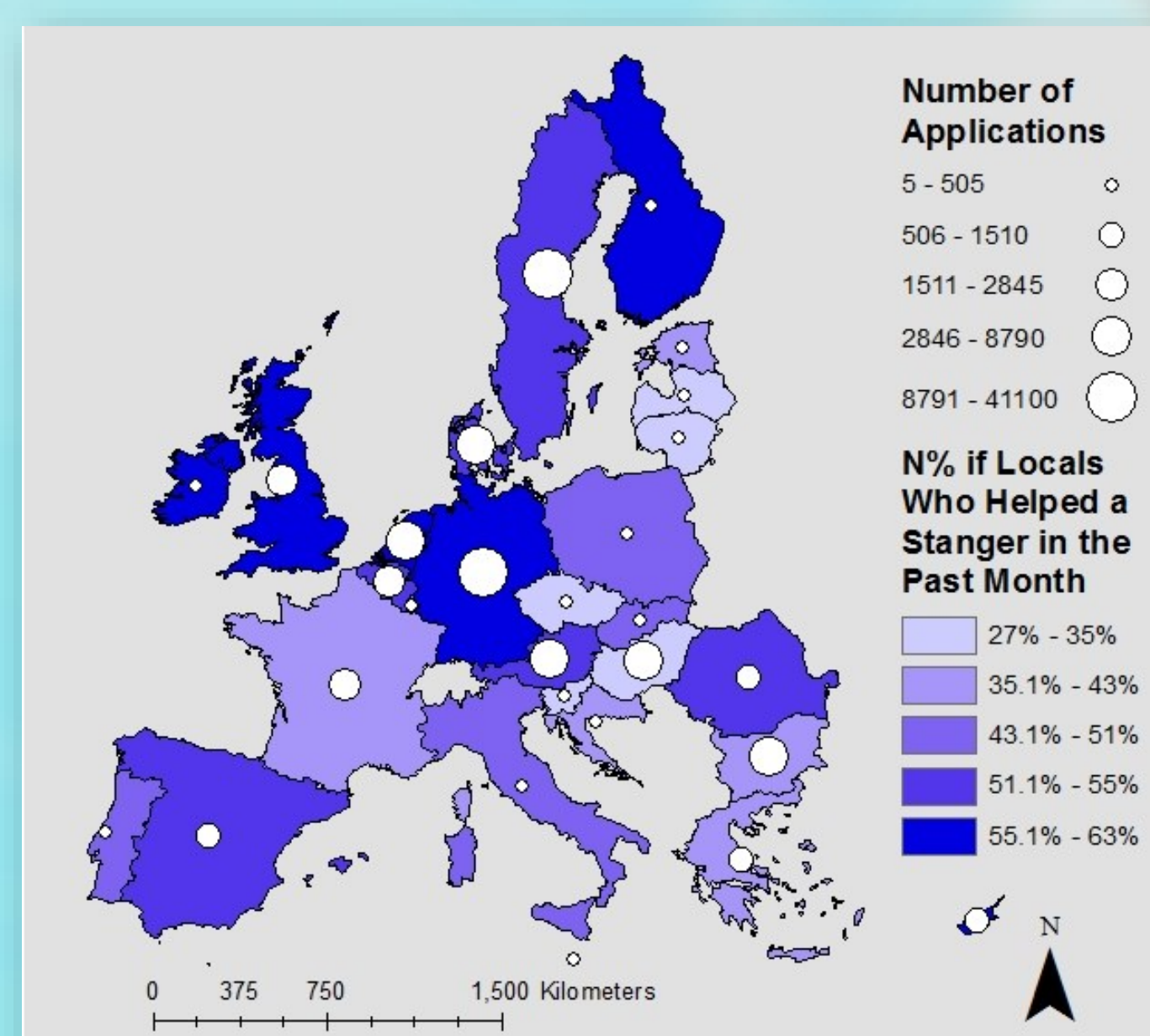
Design and Cartography: Jackie Faselt

Projections: Europe Equidistant Conic
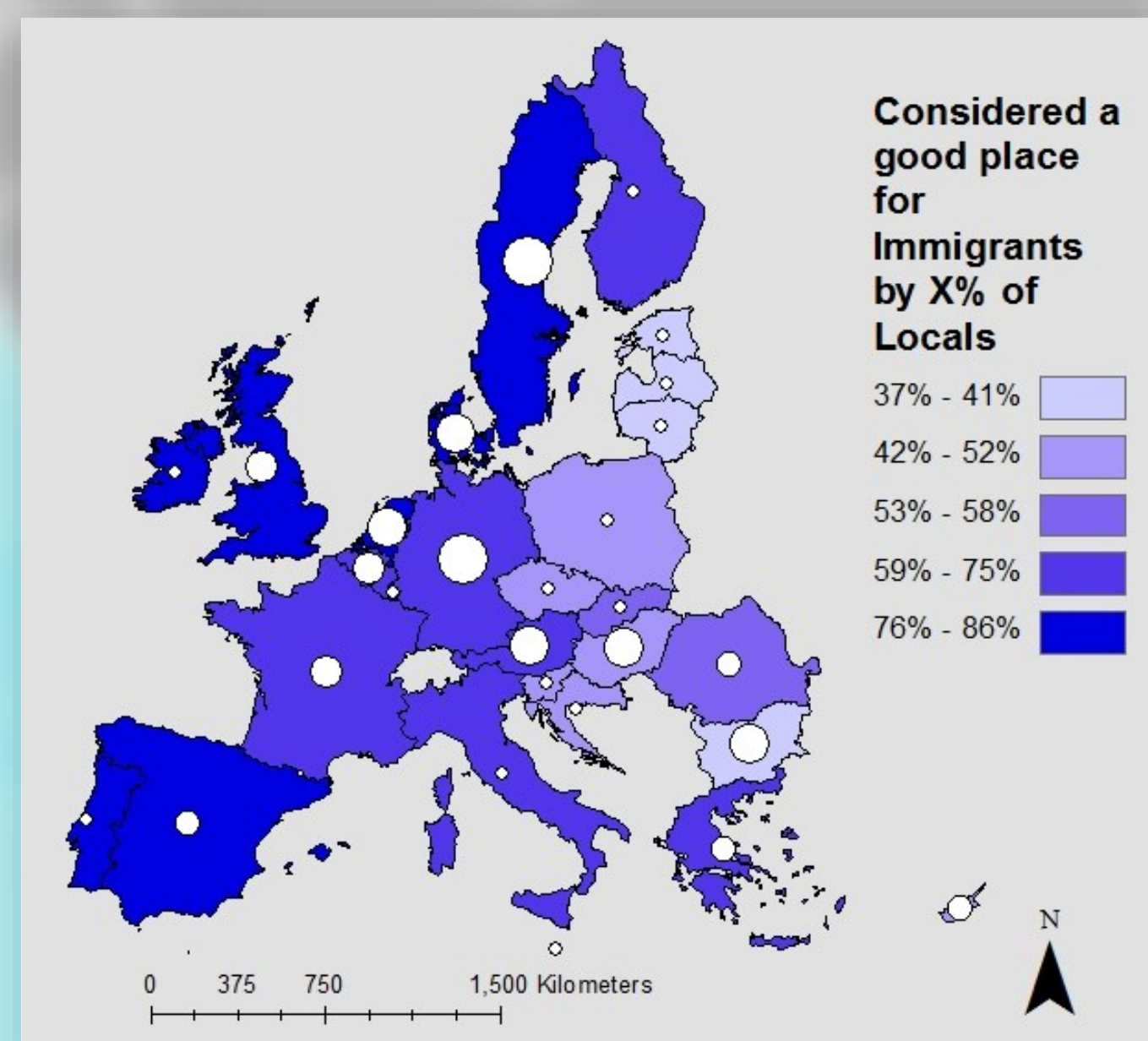
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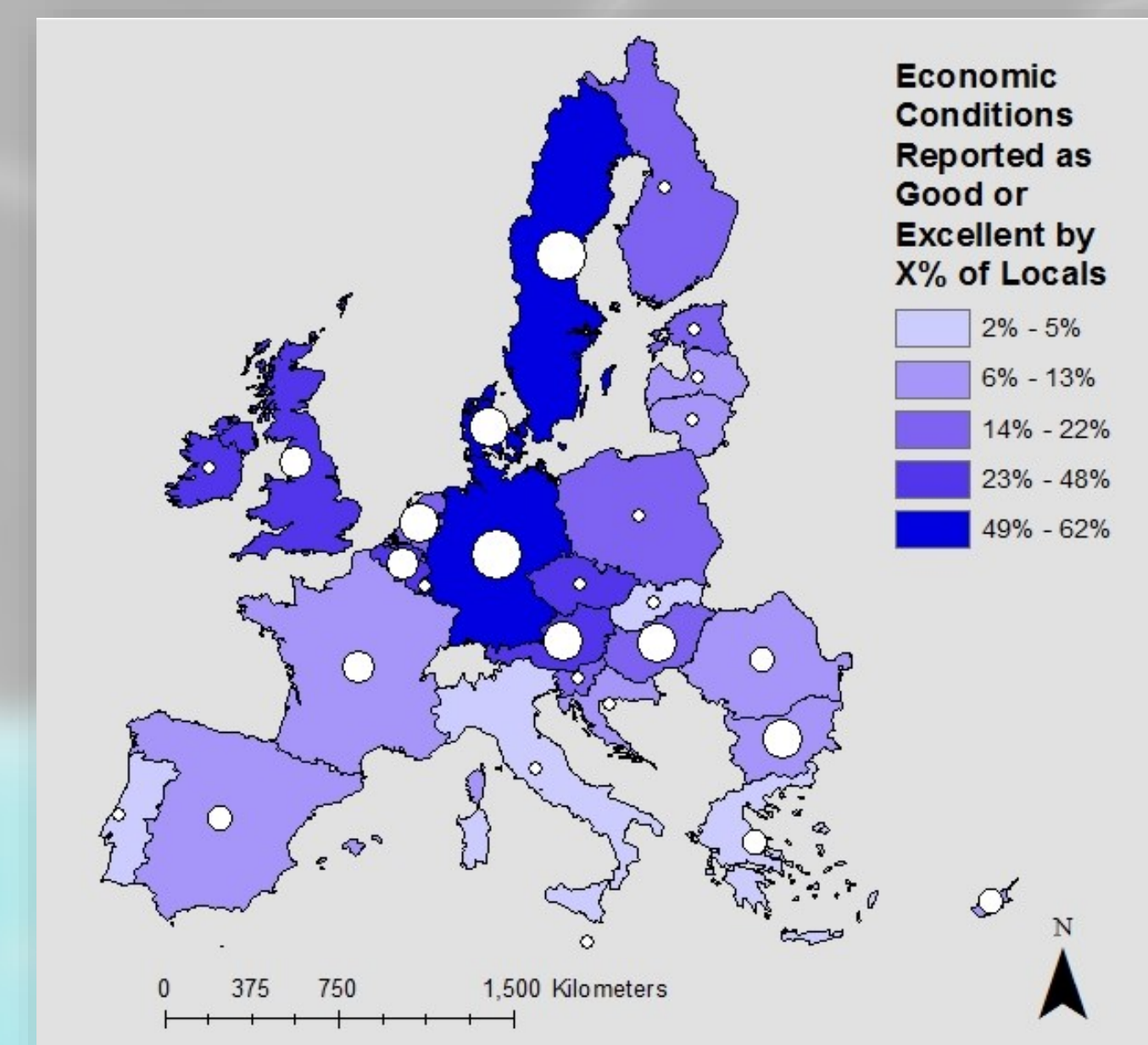
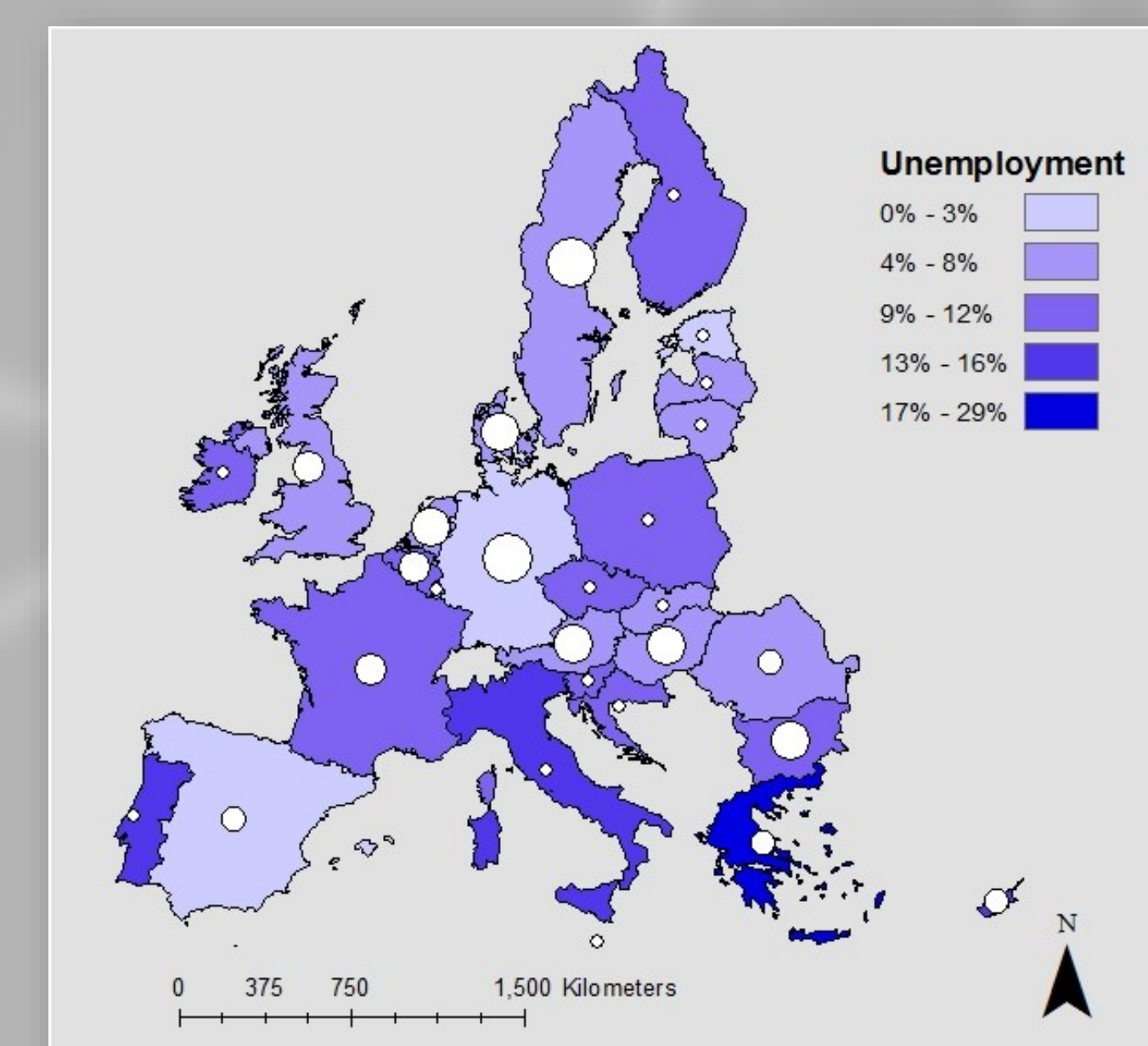**Sources:** Eurostat; Gallup; Esri

Tufts

Helpful to Strangers

Number of Applications
- 5 - 505
- 506 - 1510
- 1511 - 2845
- 2846 - 8790
- 8791 - 41100

N% if Locals Who Helped a Stanger in the Past Month
- 27% - 35%
- 35.1% - 43%
- 43.1% - 51%
- 51.1% - 55%
- 55.1% - 63%

Welcoming to Immigrants

Considered a good place for Immigrants by X% of Locals
- 37% - 41%
- 42% - 52%
- 53% - 58%
- 59% - 75%
- 76% - 86%

Economic Conditions

Economic Conditions Reported as Good or Excellent by X% of Locals
- 2% - 5%
- 6% - 13%
- 14% - 22%
- 23% - 48%
- 49% - 62%

Unemployment

Unemployment
- 0% - 3%
- 4% - 8%
- 9% - 12%
- 13% - 16%
- 17% - 29%

Application Acceptance

Application Acceptance Rate
- 0%
- 1%
- 2%
- 3% - 5%
- 6% - 20%