

Translation and Analysis of: "Syrian Refugees in Europe and Around the World," in *Four Million Refugees: The Demographic Explosion: Will Syrian Remain? Will Lebanon Escape?*

David Goldstein

Classics Senior Thesis

Introduction

The effects of the failure to resolve the almost five-year Syrian Civil War have become brutally apparent. Large NGOs, neighboring countries, and the international community continue to provide record levels of humanitarian assistance to the some 6.5 million internally and 3.5 million externally displaced Syrians. Cuts to the World Food Program and other international NGOs providing vital assistance to displaced Syrians in neighboring countries have pushed increasing levels of Syrians to flee to the European Union. No longer a faraway conflict, the Syrian immigration crises has become a top priority for South Eastern European countries and the international community which face an unprecedented flow of migrants seeking safety in the European Union.

For an issue of such size, complexity, and urgency, detailed academic analyses beyond field reporting is essential. Reliable analyses from experts in the region with cultural and linguistic expertise are axiomatic to building a full understanding the implications in migration of Syrian crises as a whole. For these reasons, I translated and analyzed a section of Dr. Ali Faur's 2015 *Four Million Refugees: The Demographic Bomb. Will Syria Remain? Will Lebanon Escape* from Arabic into English in an attempt to shed light on this issue from the perspective of an academic living, working, and researching in the field. I then provide general reflections on the crises as a whole and the future direction of this project.

Translation of "Syrian Migrants in Europe and Around the World" Parts 1, 2

Currently, the Mediterranean Sea seems more of a grave than a gate to Europe. Since October 20th, 2013, the Italian Coast Guard has saved some 155 thousand migrants in less than a year. This is compared to the thousands which have lost their lives drowning at sea during the passage to Europe, now run by smuggling and mafia networks. The success of these failed refugee rescue missions are counted in the refugee boats sunk deep into the Mediterranean Sea.¹ It is now the role of the European Union to open its doors to legal immigration and take the first step forward out of an outdated Europe.

Section 1: Migration Routes and Asylum in Europe

1. Syria as a Gathering Place for Refugees

"Only five years ago Syria was the second largest host country of refugees in the world. Today, however, Syrians have taken Afghanistan's place as the largest refugee population...It brings me great sadness to see a country which has so warmly welcomed refugees from other states to be torn apart and forced to live abroad."²

-António Guterres UNHCR Secretary General

As Secretary General of the United National High Commission of Refugees Antonio Guterres asserted in his speech before the United National General Assembly, the number of those fleeing the horrors of the Syrian Civil War to countries neighboring Syria has risen

¹ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announced on December 10th, 2014 that there are no less than 3419 undocumented migrants who have lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea since January of last year. This record toll has made this passage, "the most dangerous route in the word." More than 207,000 undocumented migrants have attempted the pass through the Mediterranean Sea since the start of this year, a number three times higher than the previous record, set in 2011 from the some 70 thousand people displaced during the "Arab Spring."

² The recorded number of Syrian refugees according to UNHCR numbers for displaced Syrians in neighboring countries was around 2.5 million at the beginning of 2014.

Guterres has said, "There are fundamental faults in a world exposed by those fleeing the violence of this atrocity by land, compelled to risk their lives by sea, or subject themselves to grave violations of Human Rights by human traffickers; there is no other conceivable way to reach a land of safety and refuge."

close to 2.5 million. This represents the largest refugee population in the world, surpassing the population of total Afghan refugees.

For decades, Syria has been a host country for migrants from Arab and foreign countries, even before the large displacements throughout the Arab World during the Arab Spring. Yet, after only four years, Syrians represent the largest number of asylum seekers out of any other nation in modern history. In neighboring countries, the population of Syrians has risen to around 3,247,362 refugees as of December 2014, according to official UNHCR data.

Since the Palestinian exodus, or 'Nekba,' in 1948, Syria has hosted large numbers of Palestinian refugees. According to UNHCR statistics, in 2010 there were around 495,970 displaced Palestinians living in Syria. Syria has also hosted the largest number of Iraqi refugees after the First Gulf War in 2000 and the American occupation of Iraq from 2003-2011 after Jordan closed its doors to Iraqi refugees over security concerns in 2005. In 2008, the number of displaced Iraqis in Syria rose to between 1.5 and 1.2 million, or 1,307,918 according to UNHCR statistics. Of the displaced people living in Syria, more than one million were registered refugees, 2,446 were asylum seekers, and around 300,000 held no citizenship. Throughout the Syrian Civil War, these vulnerable groups have become a cause for serious security concerns, chief of which has been the uncontrolled migration to neighboring countries such as Lebanon, which has witnessed some of the most drastic fluctuations in population throughout the crises.

2. Escape Routes to Europe

Depending on social and economic factors, fleeing the chaos of the Syrian Crises to Europe is possible through three different routes. They are as follows:

- **Ground Travel to Greece or Bulgaria:** Many Syrians enter Turkey and then are able to pass into Bulgaria or Greece unnoticed. Once in Europe, such migrants are eligible for

normal immigrant status. However in some cases, one can be deemed ineligible for legal immigrant status.

- **Direct Air Travel** to a member country of the EU. This route is the same as any other normal traveler traveling to another country. Upon entry, these migrants are considered routine visitors at customs. There are little statistics for such travelers, as it is difficult to trace the country of entry once inside the EU, and thus the actual number of Syrians taking this route to reach Europe. It is also possible for travelers entering a country in the EU to seek asylum in the country of entry, or to stay and continue to have illegal migrant status until traveling to another country.
- **Sea Travel Through the Mediterranean Sea** to Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Italy, and possibly France and Spain. If legal documents or entry visas are not available, reaching Europe via sea is possible despite great risk; once arrived, one is considered to have illegal immigrant status, although it is possible to seek asylum under protection of the law. This route is the preferred means for those fleeing bloodshed and in search of a permanent home.³

³ The following statistics are of undocumented Syrian arrivals to Italy by sea between 2011-2012: 2001 (11), 2002 (8), 2003 (12), 2004 (10), 2005 (48), 2006 (36), 2007 (49), 2008 (21), 2009 (40), 2010 (100), 2011 (328), 2012 (389), not including statistics between January - September 2012. From a study by Philip Frag, pg. 8.

(Picture 1-4: North African migrants in an attempt to reach European shores (Arshif France 24))



3. Asylum Abroad

Despite the growth of Syrian migrants in neighboring countries, which number at approximately 4 million, researchers suggest the number of Syrian inside the EU is not insignificant. In 2011, the total number of Syrians seeking asylum inside the borders of the EU numbered at around 8,920. In 2012, the number of asylum seekers further increased, as recorded by the number of those attempting to enter the EU illegally. EU countries have failed to keep speed with asylum requests and implement the complexity of blanket travel procedures necessary to manage the movement of Syrian refugees and asylum requests in Europe. There is also a lack of proper assistance for Syrian asylum seekers in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq.

Most EU countries hope to prevent easing visa restrictions, and by extension facilitating the reunion of Syrian families in Europe. This is part because a political solution

and a respect for humanitarian principles has yet to be found for the Syrian Crises, and the number of migrants will only continue to rise. Moreover, UNHCR statistics have shown a decrease in sources of funding even before nearing projected funding goals. This has forced hosting countries to bear the overwhelming humanitarian burden caused by of this density of Syrian migrants, which outnumber the number of residents in several Lebanese villages in Akkar and Northern Bekaa.

Data from the EU center for research, Eurostat, show an overall increase in the number of asylum requests worldwide (numbering around 407,300 in 2012, of which around 100,000 were in the EU). In terms of Syrian migrants, there were 23,510 asylum requests from Syrian migrants to the EU in 2012. This accounts for close to seven percent of total asylum requests. In total, Syrians in 2012 came in second place behind Afghani migrants (eight percent of total requests). Sweden hosts the largest number of Syrian migrants, followed by Spain, Bulgaria, and Cyprus.

As for the acceptance of Syrian refugees, each European country acts as an individual political unit, favoring national interests over joint EU goals. For example, the differences in immigration systems between Hungary Sweden, Italy, and Switzerland, have hindered the EU's ability to make swift decisions in times of emergency. Amnesty International has encouraged all EU countries to do more to aid refugees, but has focused more closely on some countries. Greece, for example, has been widely criticized by numerous NGOs for its refusing Syrian refugee boats entry into Turkish waters. According to Eurostat statistics, around 18,700 Syrians were admitted to the EU with refugee status in 2012.

4. Asylum Requests to EU Countries

Since the start of the Syrian Conflict four years ago, several EU countries have received Syrian asylum requests on humanitarian grounds. In total, Syrian asylum claims between April of 2011 and May of 2014 amount to more than 123,671 Syrian migrants

seeking asylum in Europe, mostly in Sweden and Germany (See figure 3-1), but also including the 112,170 refugees in the EU, Norway, and Switzerland.

By comparison, the number of those seeking asylum in Europe is relatively low to the number of Syrians seeking refuge in countries neighboring Syria. Since the start of the crises, only four percent of all Syrian refugees have sought asylum in Europe. To date, the total number of asylum requests to all of Europe by Syrian refugees are as follows: 6,400 in 2011, 23,400 in 2012, 51,500 in 2013, and 30,600 between January and May in 2014.

According to data from all 28 EU countries, there have been an additional 103,960 asylum requests in the last reported period (January to May 2014). Other than Sweden and Germany, which have received 57 percent of all Syrian asylum requests, five other European countries have received more than 5,000 asylum requests. Those are: Holland, Sweden, Austria, the United Kingdom, and Hungary. Together, these countries amount to 24 percent of all requests. The remaining 20 percent are to non-European countries (see figure 3-1).

Interestingly, there are 17 countries which have received less than 200 asylum requests in the same time period. Also, countries bordering the EU have noticed a rise in flow of Syrian Refugees attempting to pass into other countries.⁴

According to Eurostat data, the number of Syrian asylum requests has increased considerably during 2013. Syrian asylum requests claims have impacted all 28 EU countries, top the list of total asylum seekers to five EU countries, and rank in the top five nationalities of total asylum requests in 21 European countries. This is in addition to the increased spread of Syrians throughout the world in the last few years.

⁴ According to UNHCR (December 5th, 2014), there are more than 145,000 Syrian refugee families, an entire quarter of all Syrian refugees, in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. One in every four Syrian families is headed by a woman after a husband or main breadwinner is killed or goes missing. These women fight to survive in a spiral of poverty, isolation, and fear. The report also reveals the difficulty for women to care for a family in crowded living arrangements, such as temporary and unsafe refugee camps, in which many women live under threats of violence and exploitation. Only a quarter of these families have access to financial assistance from UNCHR and other amnesty organizations, such as the 15 organizations which offer services and aid to Syrian refugee women. As such, UNHCR has called to donors, hosting countries, and amnesty organizations, for new, urgent measures to protect Syrian refugees and refugee children.

Even more alarming, in the last reporting period in 2013, asylum requests from Syrians numbered at 50,434, making Syria the country with the largest number of asylum requests to countries in the EU (figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: countries of origin for asylum requests to all 28 EU countries in 2012 and 2013
(Eurostat)

	Gross Migrants		Percent	Rank	
	2012	2013	Change	2012	2013
Total	335,290	343,350	29.2	-	-
Syria	24,115	50,435	109.1	3	1
Russia	24,290	50,435	70.8	2	2
Afghanistan	28,020	26,200	-7.5	1	3
Serbia	19,055	22,375	17.4	4	4
Pakistan	19,875	20,815	5.2	5	5
Kosovo	10,210	20,220	98	10	6
Somalia	14,280	18,560	30	6	7
Eritrea	6,400	14,580	127.8	16	8
Iran	13,600	12,760	-6.2	7	9
Nigeria	7,520	11,590	53.1	13	10
Iraq	13,190	11,185	-15.2	8	11
Macedonia	9,625	11,065	15	11	12
Albania	7,500	11,020	46.9	14	13
Bangladesh	6,300	9,130	44.9	17	15
Georgia	10,830	9,110	-15.9	9	16
Republic of the Congo	8,305	8,350	0.5	12	17
Algeria	4,815	4,090	47.2	23	18
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5,835	7,070	21.2	19	19
Mali	2,420	6,635	174.2	21	10
Sri Lanka	7,345	6,545	-10.6	15	21
Guinea	5,235	6,510	15.5	20	22
Turkey	6,210	5,640	-9.2	18	23
Egypt	2,640	5,445	103.9	27	24
Armenia	5,520	5,220	-5.4	21	25
China / Hong Kong	5,185	5,185	0	22	26
Morocco	2,620	4,245	62	29	28
Gambia	1,515	3,530	133	41	29
Sudan	2,610	3,240	243	30	30
No-Citizenship	3,515	9,595	173	42	14
Unknown	3,315	4,330	30.2	25	27
Other	53,055	55,265	4.2	-	-

5. European Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees

While all 28 members of the EU have received immigration petitions from Syrian migrants, these requests are not evenly distributed. Of all EU countries, Sweden has received the most Syrian immigration requests, a total of 12,540, which Germany trails with 12,855, followed by Bulgaria and Holland, respectively. In all, Syrians make up the largest population of immigration petitions in eight countries, the second largest in four, and the third largest in seven (see figure 3-2). This is partly due to the increased number of Syrian asylum petitions (see map 3-1).

Figure 3-2: Distribution of Syrian asylum requests, by citizenship

EU Host Country	Rank	Syrian Asylum Petitions
Bulgaria	First	4,510
Czech Republic	Second	60
Denmark	First	1,685
Germany	Third	12,855
Estonia	Third	15
Spain	Second	625
Croatia	First	195
Cyprus	First	570
Latvia	Second	15
Hungary	Fourth	975
Switzerland	Second	1,900
Malta	Second	250
Holland	Second	2,705
Austria	Second	2,005
Poland	Second	255
Portugal	First	145
Romania	First	1,010
Slovenia	First	50
Sweden	First	12,540
UK	Fourth	2,040
Norway	Third	855

Map 3-1 Syrian New Asylum Applications from April 2011- May 2014 (Cumulative)

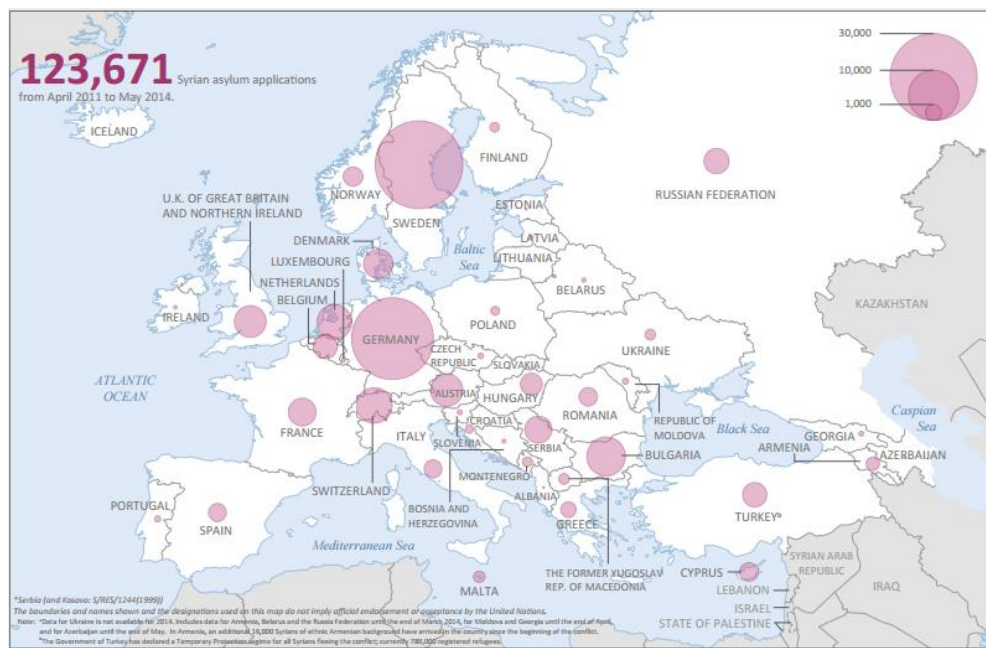
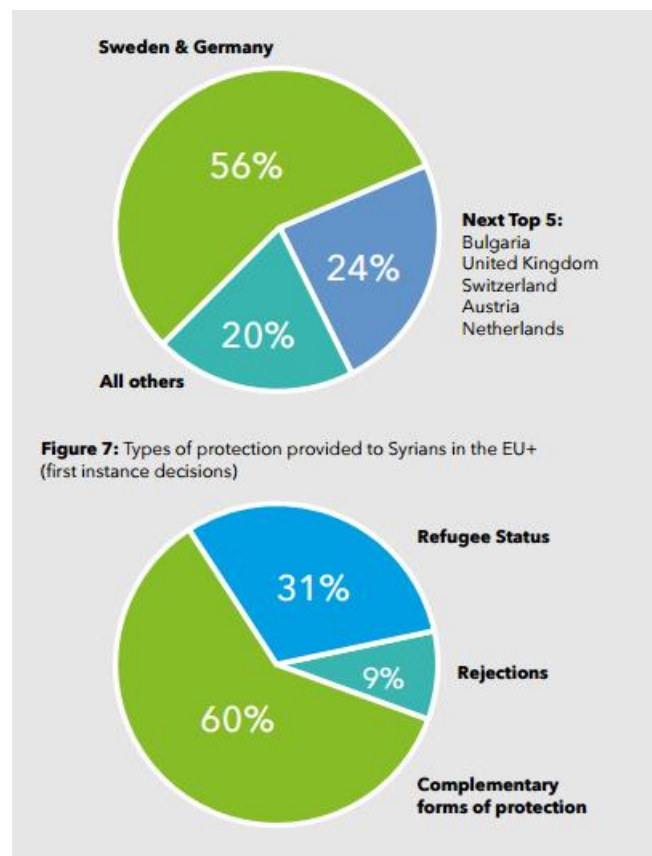


Figure 3-3: Top EU+ countries for Syrian new asylum applications



In a study of asylum requests to the EU, around one third categorized as "supporting or protecting Syrian refugees" were granted (31 percent), compared with a refusal rate of 9 percent. The remaining, roughly 60, percent were classified as being granted "complementary forms of protection" (figure 2-3).

A cause for concern, the number of asylum requests in the last recorded quarter (2013-2014) continued to rise. Syrians (according to statistics between October 2013 and July 2014) now rank as one of the top ten of migrant populations requesting refugee status in the EU, next to Eritreans, Somalis, Pakistanis, and Nigerians.

UNHCR expects the number of Syrian refugees to reach four million in the coming weeks. As hundreds die through dangers in crossing into Europe by ground and sea, Syria has become the country with the world's largest refugee population since when the conflict began in March of 2011.

UNHCR spokesperson Melissa Fleming spoke to this issue as the Syrian refugee population neared three million (mid-2014) and thousands of displaced people fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and smaller numbers to Iraq and Egypt. She noted, "states neighboring Syria have become saturated to such a large extent that many Syrians have now sought refuge in Europe through the asylum process. We ask of European countries to redouble their efforts in aiding and supporting these migrants." She continued, "if one were to take all 670 million Europeans, 16 European countries would need to host 31,800 Syrian refugees to cover the extent of the crises, whereas in Lebanon, a country of 4.4 million residents, has hosted 1.1 million.

At the time of this writing, the number of internally displaced Syrians in Lebanon has risen to roughly a third of the total Lebanese population, while the amount of total externally displaced Syrian refugees has increased to three million. In turn, this overwhelming size has

only pre-existing exacerbated social and economic crises, and pushed many to seek asylum abroad in European countries and areas of conflict by ground and by sea.

Section 2: Illegal Immigration and Smuggling Routes in Boats of Death

1. Migrant Smuggling By Sea

Countries in Southern Europe currently host thousands of refugees smuggled by sea. As the flow of refugees from North Africa and the Middle East increases, the Mediterranean has become a "graveyard for refugee boats." While countries in the EU have tried to protect their sea and ground borders from such confrontations on their Southern frontiers, the surge of smuggled migrants to Italy, Malta, Spain, and Greece has only continued.

Italy is considered to be the largest destination of refugee boats fleeing chaos and civil strife due to its geography in the center of the Mediterranean Sea. As a major port located in the center of the Mediterranean, Lampedusa is of the most popular destinations for smugglers and human traffickers, as well as refugees hoping to reach safety and security. Most smugglers and migrants travelling from Libya and Tunisia prefer the channel for its access to the shortest migrant routes to Europe.

One of the shortest migratory routes between Italy and Albania is the Otranto Chanel. Between 1991 and 2001, somewhere around 150,000-250,000 illegal migrants passed through this channel. In total, it is estimated that thousands of lives have been lost in such smuggling operations; the cost of human smuggling has only increased with the rise in casualties.⁵

2. Rise in Syrian Refugees

⁵ Fekete, L. 2003. "Death at the Border: Who is to Blame?" *IRR European Race Bulletin*, July 2011., *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 13 no 2:135.

Spikjerboer, T.P. 2007. "The Human Costs of Border Control," *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 9 no 1:127-139.

From January 2013 to January 2014 there was a dramatic increase in the amount of both Syrian and non-Syrian refugees. Whereas in June 2013 around 9,070 refugees had arrived in Europe, around 60,000 refugees had reached Europe in 2014 in the same period studied (figure 3-3). This means that the number of refugees increased by over some 600 percent in less than a year. Moreover, these statistics suggest that the number of displaced Syrians in surrounding countries could increase to a projected 3.2 million, most of which are searching for a new home out of fear of a worsening of the already splintered conflict in Syria.

Similarly, there has been an increase in the number of Syrian asylum requests to EU countries and abroad in the last few years. This speaks to the worsening of the Syrian conflict in the last period studied and its overall humanitarian fallout. To study this closer, we compared the number of new asylum requests and the total cumulative asylum requests (both EU and non-EU countries) between 2012 and 2013. We found that the number of asylum requests quadrupled (from 19,875 requests in 2012 to 81,110 requests in 2013). In the last quarter of 2013, the number of asylum requests increased by over 9,000. This represents the extent to which the internal situation in Syria has been aggravated. This also represents the larger failure to provide security to Syrian migrants hoping to return to their homes (figure 4-3); at this writing, more than half the Syrian population (11 million of the original 22 million before the crises) is in need of humanitarian assistance.

In August 2014, the number of refugees reached three million. More than 80 percent of these refugees live in unofficial settlements or temporary housing outside of camps, where it is difficult to receive necessary aid and assistance, but where some of which have been living for almost four years. Contributions from the international community to such migrants still fall very short of the humanitarian need. Currently, the UN appeal asks for some 6.5

million dollars, the largest in history, to meet all urgent humanitarian needs for those inside Syria and in neighboring countries for 2014.

Tunisia is ranked the first among the top twenty countries where refugees are smuggled by sea to Italy. Between 2008 and 2013, the top nationalities of migrants illegally smuggled into Europe (by boat) were Eritrean, Nigerian, and Somali, with Syrians coming in fifth place (seeing as the Syrian conflict began in mid-2011) above Egypt, Afghanistan, Guinea, and Mali.

It should be noted that there are also many migrants from East Asian countries, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, who travel great distances to Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco, to reach Europe by sea, despite the dangers of drowning and danger on the Mediterranean Sea (figure 5-3).

3. Refugee Smuggling to the EU in 2014

A close study of smuggling routes of migrants by sea to European countries reveals that in 2014, which as a whole witnessed large waves of migrants, the number of refugees heading to Italy by sea (around 120,000) is twice the same number in 2011. This is due to the entry of Syrian refugees forced to flee civil war and forcibly displaced. This is similar to the situation in the Lebanese Civil War, Iraq, and most states in the Middle East and North Africa which have witnessed severe internal conflict.

Spain falls in second place in terms of countries favored by migrants traveling by sea. This is in part due to its distinct geographic location as a passage for those crossing the Strait of Gibraltar from Morocco to European countries, in addition to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. Spain is known for its popular sea smuggling routes for refugees and draws migrants from Mauritania, Somalia, and the Canary Islands, despite danger from strong sea and ocean currents, in which thousands have drowned. Because of this, countries such as Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, and Spain have tightened surveillance throughout these sea routes. This

intensification of border security has resulted in the founding of the EU agency "Frontex," which aims to protect "the gates of Europe," throughout all European borders, and work to prevent future breaches by irregular migrants.

Greece has also witnessed recent waves of migration, but differs geographically from Spain and Italy in the length and extent of its ground and sea borders and its closeness to Turkey, which represents the transit country to Europe. These factors have increased the flow of migration through Greece as a popular crossing point for migrants since the late 1980s. Migrants from North Africa, East Asia, and the Middle East have increased significantly through Greece since 2000, as seen by the average number of yearly migrants increasing from 3000 refugees in 2002 to more than 8000 in 2007. However, the intensification of Greece's role in surveillance around migration routes and the Aegean Sea has led to a decline in smuggling operations attempting to pass through ground borders. In 2012 Greece constructed a separation wall on the Turkish border in an attempt to slow the flow of refugees attempting to enter Europe via Greece.

Figure 3-3 Sea arrivals to Italy - Syrians (blue) and all arrivals (red), March 2013 to May

2014

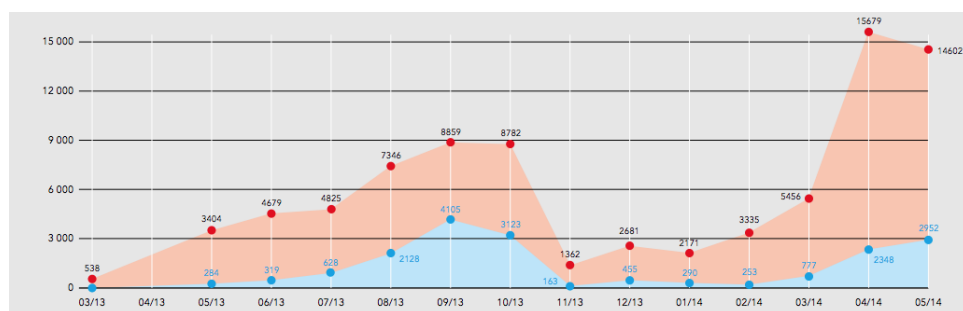


Figure 4-3 cumulative population of sea arrivals to Italy in first half of 2013 (blue) and 2014 (red)

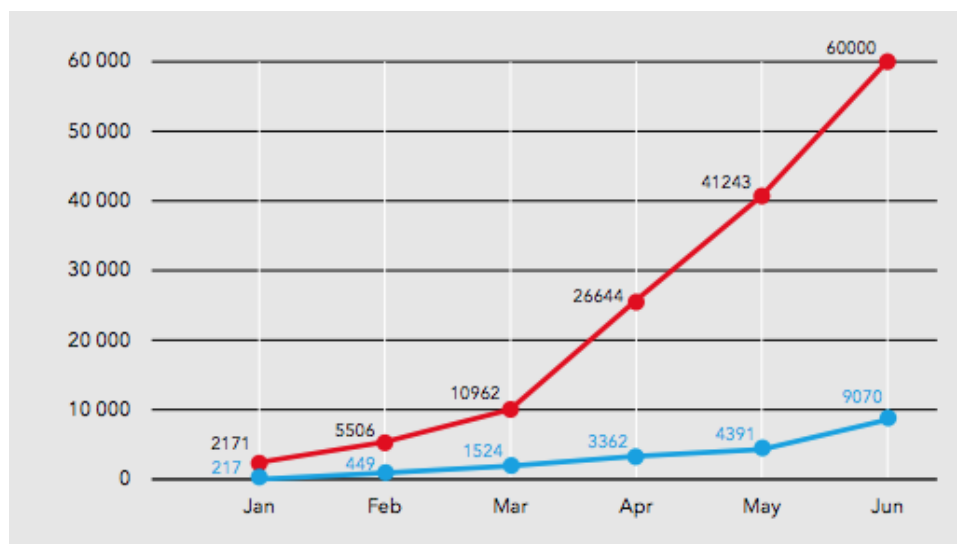
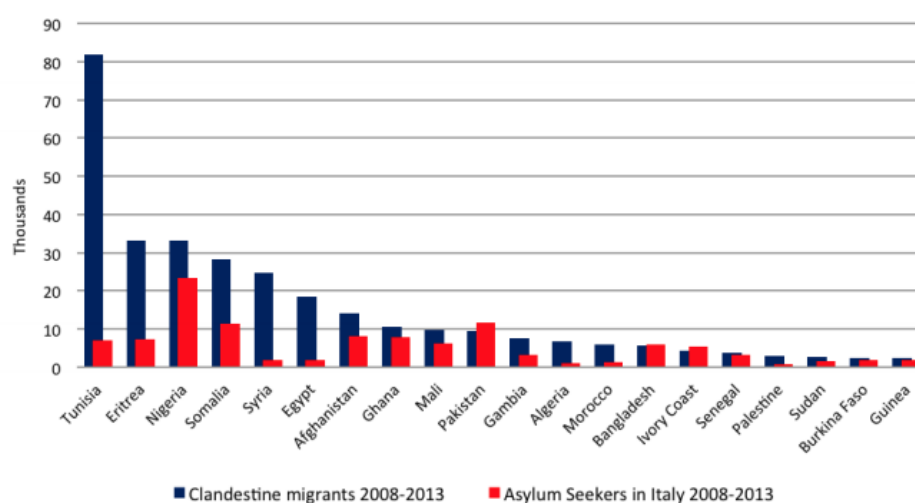


Figure 5-3 Top 20 nationalities of clandestine irregular migrants smuggled by sea to Italy⁶



4. Routes of Death: From Countries of Conflict to European Host Countries

As dangers increase, so too does the number of those lost. Many have died attempting to flee the political insecurity accompanied by the populist uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya via the Mediterranean Sea. On April 4th 2011, 213 people were killed when a boat capsized during a rescue mission off the coast of Lampedusa. On April 14th of the same year,

⁶ UNHCR Statistics, 2014. From: *Syrian Refugees in Europe: What Europe Can Do to Ensure Protection and Solidarity*. Fig 3,4 pp. 11,13.

the death toll of those fleeing the shores of Libya reached 490. Less than 20 days later, on April 28th, 330 lives were lost on the same route.

On June 2nd, 272 people were lost after a rescue mission of a capsized boat off the coast of Tunisia. With the increased number of refugees migrating by boat, the number of those lost has risen to the top of the political agenda. 2014 witnessed the largest numbers in refugee smuggling due to the worsening of the Syrian conflict, with more than 135,601 people smuggled, of which around 118,170 came to Italy alone.

According to information taken from media reports gathered by Italian NGOs, deaths of migrants by drowning numbered at 2,247 in just nine months (January 1st to September 1st 2014). However, the same statistic was much higher (3,062), according to a recent IOM report on the same period. Instead, this report was compiled from a number of different sources such as media reports and IOM field offices, IOM medical examination offices, and UNHCR data.

Essential questions still remain as to the nature of forced migrations and the appropriate political responses; to what extent is it possible to understand the underlying causes for this radically increased migration through the Mediterranean Sea? What is the size of the uncontrolled migrant labor market within these flows of migrants? Is it possible to determine the number of asylum claims which meet the necessary legal standards, and if not, is it possible to return them to their country of origin?

According to information prepared by the Italian Ministry of the Interior, some 494,555 migrants were smuggled to Italian shores between 1999 and August 2014. Less than half of these migrants (232,787) were from Mediterranean countries, such as Tunisia, Syria, the former Republic of Yugoslavia, Morocco, Palestine, Egypt and Albania. While these countries stereotypically represent this type of migrants, the data show that only two of the countries mentioned above, Morocco and Egypt, make up a limited but fixed percentage of

migrants going to Europe. The rest of these Mediterranean countries represent a slim percentage of migrants in the time period studied.

Figure 6-3 Migrants smuggled by sea to the EU 1998-2014

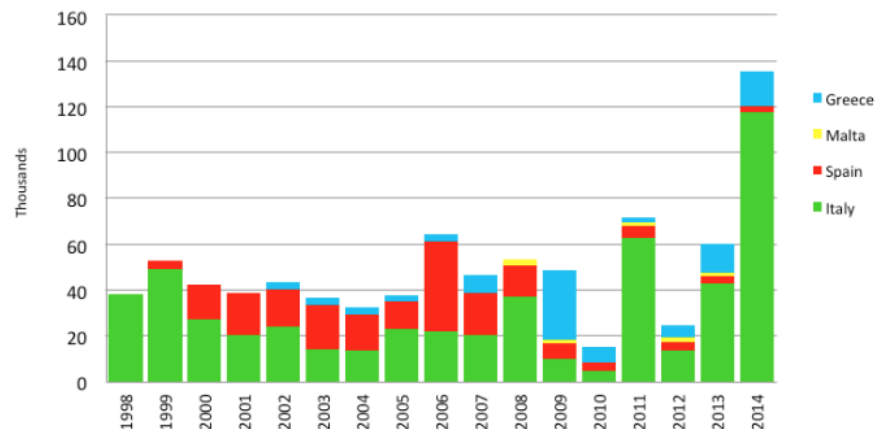
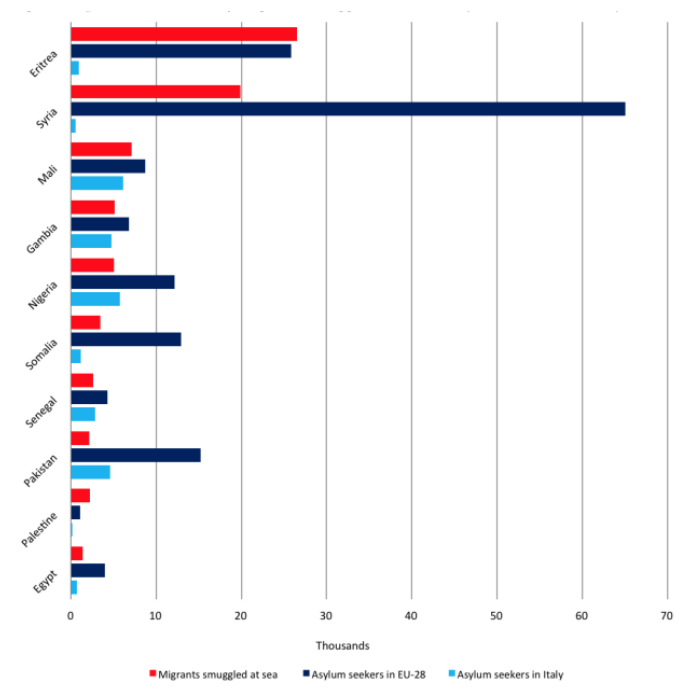


Figure 7-3 Top ten nationalities of migrants smuggled by sea to Italy, October 2013 - July 2014⁷



⁷ Philippe Fargues and Sara Bonfanti, "When The Best Option Is A Leaky Boat: Why Migrants Risk Their Lives Crossing The Mediterranean And What Europe Is Doing About It." Migration Policy Centre, EU October 2014, Fig. 6, p. 9.

Reflections and Analysis

Since Dr. Faur's writing of *Four Million Refugees*, the Syrian migration crisis has changed drastically. On a basic level, the number of registered Syrian refugees has far surpassed Faur's predicted four million by the end of 2015 (4,288,910 according to UNHCR data).⁸ However, perhaps more so than this sustained increase in displaced Syrians, a bigger change in the Syrian conflict early 2015 is the increased media presence around the migration crises. On the international stage, the conflict has erupted new rifts between world leaders, such as the recent Turkish shooting down of a Russian fighter jet and subsequent dispute.

This new international attention is especially relevant in analyzing Syrian migration to Europe, compared to internal or regional displacement. As Faur reports, the number of Syrians seeking asylum in EU countries (now 689,365, or 17 percent of gross externally displaced Syrians) is transforming the way the Syrian migration crises is viewed on the international stage. As funding sources for humanitarian aid have and continue to dry up and more Syrians flee to Europe, the focus of the conflict switches from a one of passive humanitarian action to intense socio-political pressure. For the nations mentioned in Faur's work which have pledged to resettle large amounts of displaced Syrians such as Germany (36,500), Canada (36,300), and the United Kingdom (20,000), these sizeable migrant populations will shape their social, demographic, and political makeup. For other, able countries unwilling to take more displaced Syrians such as Australia (5,800), France (1,000), and most of all the United States (0), the increase in political discourse on Syrian migrants seeking asylum has and will continue to redefine their view of refugees and relationship with the Middle East.⁹

Challenges in Translation

⁸ UNHCR, "3RP: Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015 in Response to the Syrian Crises," 2015, p. 9

⁹ UNHCR Handout, "Resettlement and Other Forms of Legal Admission for Syrian Refugees," November 24, 2015, p 1.

Throughout this project, several challenges arose in translating Dr. Faur's work. One such aspect was the translation of migration terms from Arabic into English. While most established legal terms such as refugee (لاجئ) or asylum seeker (طالب الجوء) translate directly, some frequently used terms such as 'migrant' (مهاجر) fail to express the wide array of legal language used in English (immigrant, migrant, emigrant, traveller, etc.). This subtle difference has a large impact on both in the meaning of a passage and a migrant's legal immigration status. Another challenge in translating Dr. Faur's work was dividing up long sentences into several more succinct phrases. While this is an overall stylistic difference between Arabic and English, changing the work's format can also change its meaning, especially with detail-oriented immigration matters. Special attention was paid to maintaining a focused, legal narrative while synthesizing sometimes one or two paragraph long sentences into several shorter sentences.

Conclusion

Throughout this project I highlight the Syrian migrant crises by bringing to light Dr. Ali Faur's linguistic and cultural knowledge of the issue, as well as his particular expertise in refugee and migrant demographic issues. More than an exercise in translation, this project gives a non-Arabic speaking audience access to a valuable resource and serves as an addition to Syrian migrant discourse.

Beyond the scope of the Classics capstone course, I plan to finish the section "Syrian Migrants in Europe and Around the World" by translating parts three and four, edit and revise intensively, and eventually submit this translation to be professionally certified.

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