Migration in Greece: Recent Developments in 2016

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Executive Summary

Economic Crisis and Refugee Crisis: The Day After

After an annus mirabili of 2015, faced with a dramatic refugee and financial crisis, 2016 has been a difficult albeit less dramatic year. Negotiations with creditor countries and the IMF have continued and the government has had to back track on a number of issues including continued fiscal pressure on citizens and privatisations. Unemployment has decreased by a couple of points (from 24.5% to 23.2% between summer 2015 and summer 2016), but the situation remains particularly difficult in all sectors including health and education while economic growth registered while no longer negative, remains particularly low (0.1% in summer 2015, 0.2% in summer 2016).Within this difficult soico-economic conditions, asylum seeker and migration flows have continued largely unabated by winter weather till end of January 2016, decreased as the Balkan route closed in February 2016 and came nearly to a halt as of late March 2016 when the EU-Turkey agreement was signed.

Nonetheless, 167,000 people have arrived in Greece in the period between January and 3 October 2016 of which 147,000 had arrived in the period 1st January till 20 March 2016. There are currently an estimated number of 40,000 migrants/asylum seekers in the mainland who had arrived before 26 March 2016 and hence are eligible for relocation to another EU member state and/or for asylum in Greece (or indeed for return if their asylum claim is deemed unfounder or if they are irregular economic migrants), and a slowly increasing number of asylum seekers stuck in the main Aegean islands (Lesvos, Samos, Kos, Leros) who arrived from 19 March onwards. While flows have been reduced to a trickle in the period between March and October 2016 (the time of writing this report), the overall number of people present on the islands has been five times more– from 3,000 in March to nearly 16,000 in the beginning of December 2016[1] as very few people have been returned to Turkey under the auspices of the agreement and even fewer have been transferred to the mainland because particularly vulnerable (unaccompanied minors, women that have suffered abuse, victims of trafficking).

Asylum and Transit

The developments that occured during 2016, namely the closing down of the Balkan route and the EU-Turkey deal have and will have a big impact on the asylum and migration policy in the EU as a whole. A sharp increase in asylum, family reunification and relocation applications emerged during 2016, as these schemes appear to be the only alternative for the thousands of migrants and refugees stranded in Greece. While recognition rates presented an increase during 2015 (see Greece report for OECD in 2015), they did not continue to rise during 2016. The acceptance rate of asylum applications on first instance fell from 11.8% in 2015 to 3.8% in 2016. The same goes for the subsidiary protection that fell from 0.9% to 0.6%.

The Greek government has implemented a pre-registration procedure for those stranded in mainland Greece and eligible for asylum as well as possibly relcoation. The first registration

[1] See https://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83

was completed in June-July 2016 and some 27,592 persons were registered. These people will now be called for asylum interviews and if their applications are accepted, they will be eligible for relocation. It is worth noting that NGOs voice concerns that people who were not residing in reception camps, did not register.

The relocation mechanism decided on December 2015 continues extremely slowly. The formally pledged relocation applications in Greece reached the 9,776, in September 2016. The total number of persons that have been successfully relocated raises at 4,455 out of the total 63,302 that EU has foreseen to relocate until September 2017. Still this is a significant increase in terms of the few hundreds that were relocated in spring 2016.

A new law (L4375/2016) has been hastily adopted by the Greek government in April 2016, implementing a partial reform of the asylum seeking application processing. The Law mainly establishes what has been agreed in the EU-Turkey deal, with key issue the introduction of an exceptional regime applicable at border areas. Other provisions included in the reform however seek to tackle the backlog cases with the attribution of 2-year residence permits on humanitarian grounds. Only shortly after the Law's entry into force, modifications took place targeting the restructuring of the Appeal Committees with a view to reducing the possibilities for appellants to request a hearing and thus aiming at speeding up the processing of asylum applications lodged and examined in the Aegean islands, where those arriving after the 19th of March are held, with a view to be returned to Turkey under the EU-Turkey agreement.

Labour Market and Economic Migration Management

The 2011 census data confirm the imbalanced gender composition of the migrant population– men are more numerous than women. However this imbalance varies among groups. The updated data from the Labour Force Survey for 2016 suggest a significant decrease in the total migrant population since the 2011 census, accounting thus for 5,5 % in 2016, whereas in 2015 accounted for 6% of the total population. December 2010 registered the highest number of valid stay permits) since then and until 2014 there is a continuous decrease in the number of valid stay permits. However the years 2015 and 2016 present an increase with 572,574 valid stay permits, as reported at the end of September 2016. Moreover long duration stay permits seam to rise in number ans also in rate in compariston with total stay permits since 2012.

A more detailed analysis on data concerning the labour market present that for the years 2015 and 2016 migrants are mainly occupied in the tertiary sector, with Albanians being the most represented group in all three sectors. For the periode 2015-2016, according to the Labour Force Survey, unenployment for migrants show a small rise from the 3rd Trimester of 2015 until the 2nd Trimester of 2016. Even though it reached its peak at the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016. Women seam to be more influenced than men. In the 2nd Trimester of 2016 migrant men's unemployment rates at 24,9%, and respectively women's unemployment rates at 32,6% .

Emigration from Greece

Greece is actually going through what has been characterized as its third phase of massive emigration. What make this phase different than the previous two are the age, the educational level and the professional experience of the outgoing migrants. From 2008 until 2013 almost 223,000 young people, Greek residents, aged between 25-39 years old, permanently left

Greece, directing themselves to other EU countries looking for work, or better employment conditions.

Concluding Remarks

The sharp increase of arrivals of refugees and migrants at the Greek Turkish borders during 2015, has been followed by strict controls in EU member state's boders during 2016. The closing down of the Balkanic route and the EU-Turkey Deal reduced significantly refugees mobility and right to apply for asylum. At the same time unfaireness as far as it concerns access to rights became more and more visible among the different nationalities that started being stranded in Greece. The EU member states practices implemented so far, are moving towards a direction of blocking the channeling of refugees among them. Greece is confronted with a change occuring at its borders and mainland. From a country that migrants were passing through, to country that they are going to be stranded. EU as a whole and Greece as one of its external borders are challenged to react upon that.

1. Introduction

The difficult political landscape in Greece, with high unemployment rates in the population and even higher rates among third country nationals, has been put under further pressure by the massive transit/arrival of asylum seekers from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan as well as of people with mixed motivations (economic and political) from other Asian and African countries including Pakistan, Somalia, or Bangladesh, for instance.

Throughout 2015 Greece has been transited by high numbers of refugees and migrants en route to Nothern or Central European countries. Greece's caracter of a 'transit through' territory however has changed as of February 2016 when the so called 'Balkan route' for Syrian and other refugees has been disrupted. As the flow was judged unmanageable, police authorities from the countries involved came to an agreement to close their borders[2] leaving thus Greece alone, as the first member state neighbouring Turkey to deal with the incoming flows. This development has created enormous pressure on the country and its asylum processing as well as irregular migration management system. While thus far efforst had concentrated on providing first assistance and seeing people through to the northern border, as of late February 2016 Greece has been called to provide both secondary reception facilities and of course registration of asylum claims.

Another crucial development in early 2016 has been the EU-Turkey Agreement signed on March 18, by European prime ministers as a response to the significant refugee flows from Turkey to Greece and through Greece to other EU countries. The EU-Turkey Agreement foresees that all migrants who arrived on Greek islands via Turkey or who are intercepted in the Aegean Sea after that date (notably the 18th of March 2016) will be returned to Turkey. In return, the EU agreed, among other things to relocate directly from Turkey a number of Syrians equal to the number of those intercepted and returned to that country. The Agreement applies to all irregular migrants and asylum seekers who arrived in Greece after 18 March 2016 as Turkey is declared a safe third country and hence article 38 of the Asylum Procedures Directive, about the Safe Third Country principle applies.

These two developments, the closure of the Balkan route and the signature of the EU Turkey agreement which has started being implemented already on 25 March 2016 have led to a dramatic reduction of the flows from several hundreds/few thousands per day to a dozen of people per day or a few hundred per month. Thus while the challenge of huge transit flows has been transformed to the challenge of receiving and processing those tens of thousands that were already in continental Greece as well as the few thousands that were 'trapped' on the Aegean islands in view of their return to Tureky.

[2]At the meeting held in Skopje on 3 February 2016 and in Zagreb on 18 February 2016, the Heads of Police Services of the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia agreed that the migration flow along the Western Balkans route has to be reduced to the greatest possible extent. Joint statement of the Heads of Police Services from the meeting held in Zagreb, Croatia on 18 February 2016.

Government and civil society resources including international organisations have been initially dedicated to the setup and organisation of the first reception/accommodation facilities, provision of food and basic items of hygiene and clothing as well as transport actually of the transit populations to those camps as several were caught by the change in the policy while literally en route to the borders. However the need for speeding up registration and asylum processing became soon apparent. That was important both for the asylum seekers themselves and for the Greek authorities that could only claim for relocation if people had been registered and processed as asylum seekers.

The registration exercise started on 8 June 2016 and proceeded relatively smoothly for people who were hosted in the various reception camps. It was less smooth and less comprehensive for people who lived in urban areas outside the camps. Indeed the registration was declared completed on 1st August 2016 and approx. 29,000 people registered but civil society actors note that asylum seekers and irregular migrants living outside the camps were not fully covered.

It is worth noting that while asylum seekers and irregular migrants having arrived to Greece until 18 March 2016 as part of the 'Mediterranean crisis' live in open reception centres and other hospitality structures, those how arrived after that date are kept on the islands, in detention in the formerly open reception centres. Indeed this return to detention of asylum seekers has come as a blow to the earlier policy of this govern ent which had overhauled the blanket detention policy adopted by the previous governments (as discussed aslo in the 2015 report).

Taking into account these exceptional policy and political developments that took place largely outside Greece but had a direct impact on the situation in the country, this report seeks to provide an overview of the immigrant population in Greece, its size and main socio-demographic features as well as its labour market insertion. Special attention is of course paid to the current situation as regards the flows of asylum seekers and irregular migrants arriving/arrived on the Greek islands via Turkey. The report outlines the main developments in migration and asylum policy more generally and takes a look at the migration prospects (including emigration dynamics) for Greece in the second half of the 2010s decade.

2. The Migrant Population in Greece

While the 2011 national census[3] data, registered 713,000 third country nationals[4] and 199,000 EU citizens (non-Greek) living in Greece accounting respectively for 6.5% and 1.8% of the total resident population,most up to date data coming from the Labour Force Survey of 2016 (second Trimester) suggest a significant decrease in the total migrant population to 586,164 people and 99,422 EU citizens (non-Greeks) (see tables 1 and 2 below), accounting thus for

[3]While the national census of 2011 does not provide the most up to date data for 2016, it is worth consulting as regards the total migrant population residing in Greek as it does not distinguish between legal and undocumented residents. Even though one might consider that recent arrivals were not registered as at all probability they lacked a fixed domicile.

[4]The largest immigrant groups were Albanians (364,132), Bulgarians (31,569), Romanians (23,208), Pakistanis (15,347), Georgians (13,915), Ukrainians (11,059), followed by Russians (11,010), and finally Poles (8,384). It should be noted again here that data provided by LFS are purely indicative, as they are accompanied by extremely large sampling errors.

4.5% and 0.9% respectively of the total resident population[5].It is of course possible that the LFS data over-represent the reduction of the immigrant population as they are not as accurate as census data, nevertheless the decrease in the migrant residents is dramatic.

Table 1: Stock of Foreign Population in Greece, 4th Trimester 2015

	Size of immigrant stock	% of total resident population
Total TCN population	491,850	4.5%
Total EU population (non Greeks)	99,475	0.9%
Total immigrant stock	591,325	5,5%
Total population of Greece	10,814,188	100.00

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), Labour Force Survey 2015, 4th Trimester.

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Table 2: Stock of Foreign Population in Greece, 2nd Trimester 2016

	Size of immigrant stock	% of total resident population
Total TCN population	486,742	5% (4.5%)
Total EU population (non Greeks)	99,422	1% (0.9%)
Total immigrant stock	586,164	6% (5.4%)
Total population of Greece	10,789,602	100.00

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), Labour Force Survey 2016, 2nd Trimester.

Data on effective inflows and outflows of immigrants in Greece are based on the issuing and renewal (or not) of stay permits but may not be accurate as people may stay on in the country even if they lose their legal status or may enter the country undocumented. However, data on stay permits do give an indication of the actual trend in terms of inflows and outflows and also in terms of the possible de-legalisation of migrants who previously had a legal status.

As previously reported (SOPEMI Report of 2015), December 2010 registered the highest number of valid stay permits (more than 600,000) since then and until 2014 there is a continuous decrease in the number of valid stay permits. However the years 2015 and 2016 present an increase with 572,574 valid stay permits, reported at the end of September 2016. This increase is probably due to the re-legalisation of some migrants who lost earlier their status because of unemployment and who were drawn back to legal status thanks to the permits for exceptional/humanitarian reasons (such permits include people who have lived in Greece for the past 10 years and who can prove that they held legal stay status during part of that period).

Table 3: Valid Stay Permits for Third Country Nationals, per gender 2010-2015

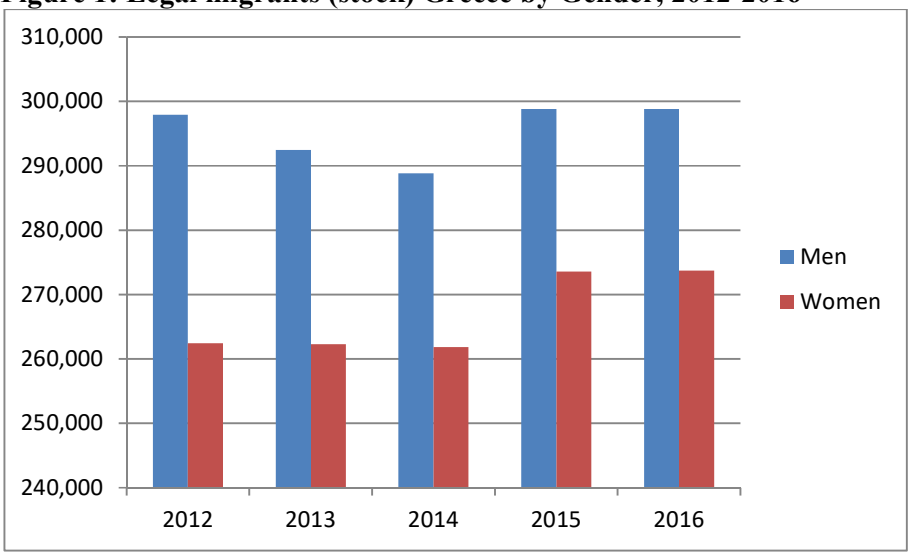
Valid Stay permits TCNs	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016*

[5]The comparison with the data analysed in the 2015 report show a small decrease between June 2015 and the first Trimester of 2016. For more details please refer to report 2015.

Men	297,924	292,460	288,837	298,800	298,830
Women	262,437	262,292	261,824	273,569	273,744
Total	560,361	554,752	550,661	572,369	572,574

Source: Data provided by the Ministry of Interior, database of permits for TCNs, upon our request for this report. Note: Data refer to 31 December of each year. Data for 2016 refer to 29 Septemper 2016.

Figure 1: Legal migrants (stock) Greece by Gender, 2012-2016



Source: Database of valid stay permits, Ministry of Interior, upon request. Data refer to valid permits on the 31st of December of each year except 2016 where data refer to valid permits on the 29thof September.

Indeed data provided by the Ministry of Interior upon request show that there are 64,326 permits(of those 39,813 permits in process concern men and 24,513 women), who were in process on 29 September. Two thirds of these permits are under the 'other' category which includes these permits on humanitarian/exceptional grounds.

Table 4: Pending applications for residence permits in September 29 of 2016, by gender

Category	Men	Women	Total
Employment	2,479	874	**3,353**
Family reunification	6,509	8,712	**15,221**
Studies	152	129	**281**

Other	30,673	14,798	**45,471**
Total	**39,813**	**24,513**	**64,326**

Source: Data provided by the Ministry of Interior, upon our request for this report.

It would be thus reasonable to assume that according to the data from the Ministry of the Interior, there are today approxiamtely 637,000 non EU nationals residing in Greece (summing up the valid permits and those in process for issuing/renewal), equivalent to 6% of the total resident population. This number is 20% higher than that provided by the Labour Force Survey which estimates the TCN populatkino at 486,000. It is likely that this under-representation of the immigrant stock in the LFS data is due to their reduced levels of employment during the last six years, i.e. during the economic crisis' period.

3. Irregular Migration Flows and Readmissions

Greece has been characterised by relatively high irregular migrant population stocks and flows during the past 26 years. All these years different shifts are occuring vis à vis the border areas that constitute the principal entrances for the inflows of irregular migrants (see table below). Different geopolitical evolutions led more than one million people to cross the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas starting from January 2015. The total number of arrivals in Greece from Turkey was 821,000 from 1st Jan till 22 Dec 2015[6]. Flows continued at a high pace during the first two months of 2016 with 147,000 people arriving, bringing thus the total number of irregular migrants/asylum seekers reaching Greece close to a million.

By contrast since the closure of the Balkan route and the signature and implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement, inflows decreased dramatically. Thus from 19 March till 26 September, total flows to Greece were just under 20,000 people, which by comparison to 2015 is a trickle albeit by comparison to years like 2009, 2010 or 2011 is a small 'crisis'.

Data provided by the Greek police, per border area and per nationality (see Table 5 and 6 below) provide a detailed and comprehensive view of the total arrivals of irregular migrants/asylum seekers in the country during 2015 and 2016 (first 9 months).
In 2016, Syrians remain the largest group as in 2015 although they present a sharp decrease in comparison to that year (approximately 420,000 less people). Similarly, Afghans remain the second largest nationality group, even if they also have significantly decreased compared to 2015 (approximately 172,000 less people). Iraqis remain the third largest nationality group in 2016, like in 2015, while Pakistanis and Albanians fall into 4th and 5th position with perhaps a record low for Albanians at just over 6,000 apprehensions (see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Apprehensions of irregular migrants, per border, 2015-2016

Border \ Year	2015	2016
Greek-Albanian Border	5.131	3.222
Greek-FYROM Border	1.072	492
Greek-Bulgarian Border	580	720

[6] Data concerning the Mediterranean crisis are taken from IOM: http://migration.iom.int/europe/ and http://missingmigrants.iom.int/infographics

Greek-Turkish land Border	1.031	1.865
D.A. Lesbos	61.636	92.229
D.A. Chios	21.925	37.302
D.A. Samos	14.604	12.923
A'D.A. Dod/Nhsos	6.267	4.073
B'D.A. Dod/Nhsos	28.100	13.323
D.A. Cyclades	365	241
Samothrace	1.149	369
Crete	2.092	956
Rest of the country	12.774	9.028
Total	1,100.781	2,951.965

Note: data refer to apprehensions, not to people. Hence the same person if apprehended twice counts twice. * data refer to the first 7 months of 2015 and first 7 months of 2016
Source: Greek police data, www.astynomia.gr

Table 6 : Apprehensions of irregular migrants in Greece (at the borders and within the country, 5 main nationality groups), 2011-2016*

2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016*	
Afghanistan	28,528	Afghanistan	16,584	Albania	15,389	Syria	32,520	Syria	499,495	Syria	79,471
Pakistan	19,975	Pakistan	11,136	Syria	8,517	Albania	16,751	Afghanistan	213,267	Afghanistan	41,222
Albania	11,733	Albania	10,602	Afghanistan	6,412	Afghanistan	12,901	Pakistan	27,261	Iraq	25,781
Bangladesh	5,416	Syria	7,927	Pakistan	3,982	Pakistan	6,184	Albania	16,910	Pakistan	9,311
Algeria	5,398	Bangladesh	7,863	Bangladesh	1,524	Somalia	3,621	Iraq	91,769	Albania	6,129

Note: data refer to apprehensions, not to people. Hence the same person if apprehended twice counts twice. *
Data for 2016 refer to the first 7 months.
Source: Greek police data, www.astynomia.gr

Data on returns and readmissions are useful to complement this overview of irregular migrant and asylum seeker in- and outflows: returns to Albania have decreased during 2016, however still remain by far the largest nationality group. While Pakistanis and Georgians were among the most common returned nationalities in 2014-2015, this year Moroccans as well as Iraquis and Afghans emerge as the 2nd, 4th and 5th largest nationality groups for returns/readmissions.

Table 7: Returns of irregular migrants from Greece (5 main nationality groups) 2014-2016*

2014		2015		2016*	
Albania	9,677	Albania	9,628	Albania	4,134
Pakistan	3,563	Pakistan	1,543	Morocco	1,236
Georgia	1,202	Georgia	810	Pakistan	900
Bangladesh	1,012	Boulgaria	317	Iraq	757
Afghanistan	612	Syria*	310	Afghanistan	595

Source: Data provided by Hellenic police, database of foreigners branch, upon request. Data for 2016 refer to the first 8 months. Data on Syria* refer to voluntary returns not expulsions/involuntary returns.
Data on 2016 refer to the first nine months.

Data provided by the Hellenic Police offer also an interesting overview as to the legal basis for executing involuntary returns/readmissions to Turkey and other countries.

Table 8: The legal basis of returns of irregular migrants from Greece 2014-2016*

	Greek-Turkish Agreement	EU-Turkey Deal
2014	6	-
2015	8	-
2016*	1,055	484
Total	**1,069**	**484**

Source: Data provided by Hellenic police, database of foreigners branch, upon request. Data for 2016 refer to the first 8 months.

Table 9: Returns of irregular migrants from Greece (by followed procedure)

	2014	2015	2016*
Forced	12,818	11,148	5,633
Fast track Readmissions*	7,475	5,949	2,322
Total	**20,293**	**17,097**	**7,955**
Voluntary IOM	7,334	3,718	4,228
Voluntary police	162	53	0
Total	**7,496**	**3,771**	**4,228**

Source: Data provided by Hellenic police, database of foreigners branch, upon request. Data for 2016 refer to the first 8 months.

4. Composition and Features of the Immigrant Population

About 60 % of Greece's foreign population comes from Albania while the second largest group are Bulgarian citizens, but their percentage in the total migrant population is considerably smaller. Romanians and Georgians are the third and fourth largest communities. While data on valid permits at the end of September 2016 provide for the most accurate picture concerning the TCN population, the 2011 census data are a useful source of comparision and the LFS data for June 2016 provide for an estimate of the EU migrant population.

Table 10: National Composition of the Migrant Population (top 15 Nationalities)

	Population		**Labour Force Survey**		**TCN valid permits**	
	Census 2011		2nd Trimester 2016		on 29.09.2016	
Country of Origin	Number	Country of Origin	Number	Percentage	**Number**	Percentage
Albania	480,851	Albania	364,132	62.1	**398,632**	53.5
Bulgaria	75,917	Bulgaria	31,569	5.4		
Romania	46,524	Romania	23,208	4		
Pakistan	34,178	Pakistan	15,347	2.6	**16,855**	2.3
Georgia	27,407	Georgia	13,915	2.4	**18,996**	2.5

Ukraine	17,008	Ukraine	11,059	2	**19,774**	2.6
UK	15,388	Russia	11,010	2	**15,069**	2
Cyprus	14,448	Poland	8,384	1.4		
Poland	14,145	Turkey	8,290	1.4	**1,670**	0.2
Russia	13,809	India	7,856	1.3	**14,456**	2
India	11,333	Bangladesh	7,759	1.3	**6,522**	0.9
Bangladesh	11,076	Germany	7,713	1.3		
Germany	10,782	Egypt	7,376	1.2	**12,314**	1.6
Egypt	10,455	Cyprus	7,188	1.2		
Moldova	10,391	UK	4,539	0.8	**42**	Almost zero (0.005%)
Philippines	9,807					
Armenia	8,113					
Syria	7,628					
Afghanistan	6,911					
USA	5,773					
OTHER	80,056	**OTHER**	**56,818**	**10**	**260,139**	**35**
TOTAL	**912,000**	**TOTAL**	**586,163**	**100**	**744,695**	**100**

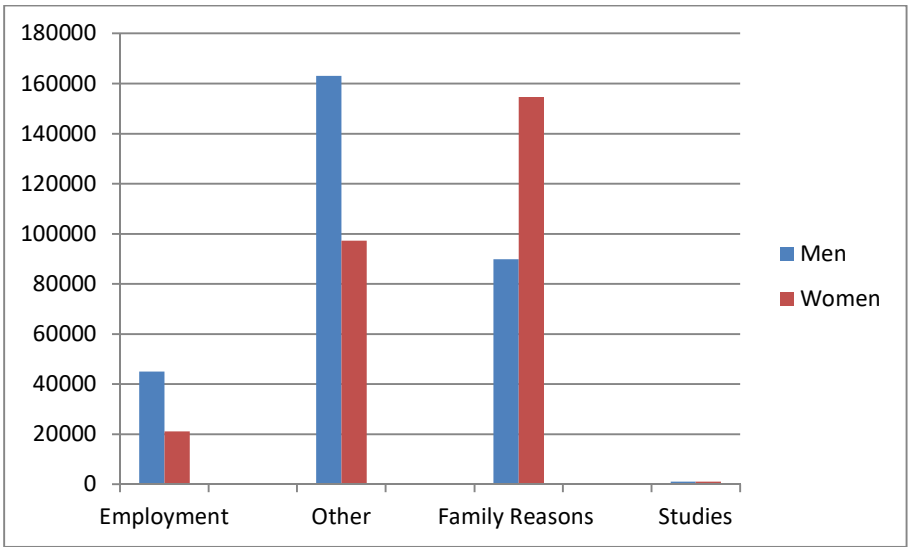
Sources: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), National Census Data 2011, also Labour Force Survey, 2nd Trimester 2016; Ministry of Interior, Valid Stay Permits on 29 September 2016.

Concerning the purpose of third country nationals' stay in Greece (see figure below), 54.5% of men hold permits of 10-year or indefinite duration, which are included in the 'other category', folowed by permits for family reunification (30%) and stay permits for employment purposes (15%)[7]. The majority of women hold family reunification permits (56.5%) followed by 10-year or indefinite duration permits (35.5%) and employment permits (7.7%)[8]. Student permits are considerably low in number. There is a clear shift here of the permits from those of employment (for men) and of family reunification (for women) into those of 10-year or indefinite duration which suggests that the migrant population in Greece is stabilised and largely long term settled in the country. This shift also testifies to the significant unemployment and underemployment challenges that migrant like also native workers have faced in the last few years.

Figure 2: Stay permits by gender and purpose, 29 September 2016

[7]The percentages for men correspond respectively to the following absolute numbers: 45,002 for employment, 89,841 for family reasons, 162,996 for other reasons and 991 for studies.

[8]The percentages for women correspond respectively to the following absolute numbers: 20,992 for employment, 154,636 for family reasons, 97,143 for other reasons and 973 for studies.



Source: Graph compiled by authors on the basis of data provided by the Ministry of Interior.

A legal clarification is in order here concerning the different types of long term permits available in Greece, in line with the Migration Code (Law 4251/2014) which regulates matters of entry, stay and social integration of third country nationals in Greece, integrating previous laws and bringing the Greek legislation up to date with EU law.

The long term migration permits, as defined by the Migration Code (L4251/2014, article 7),are as follows: the 10-year long permit, the second generation permit, the permit of indefinite duration and the long-term resident permit. The long term resident permits refer to the EU long term resident status (as defined in 109/2003 EC). The permits of 10-year long and indefinite duration reflect national long term permits and are not constitute subcategories of the EU long term permit. In other words, all fourtypesconstitute long-term residency arrangements[9].

Table 11: Long-Term Permits, by type, per gender 2012-2016*

	2012		**2013**		**2014**		**2015**		**2016**	
Type of stay permit	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**

[9]According to the Ministry of the interior, the long-term permits are not only issuing a long term arrangement (5 years and above) to their holders, they also provide them with certain rights. Therefore, duration and rights are the two characteristics that define the long-term permits. In this sense other types of stay permits could also be included to this category, such as residence card[9] (deltio diamonis) issued to a member of Greek or EU citizen's family, or permanent residence[9] (deltio monimis diamonis) issued to a member of Greek or EU citizen's family. However, if we include these two types in the long-term category, the discussion can easily be extended to other categories of family membership that involve also family reunification and do not concern this categorization of stay permits according to the Migration Code. Therefore, for methodological reasons they are excluded from this category. The reason why we therefore refer to them is so as to notice that the percentage of long-stay permits is in practice higher, than the data present.

Permits of 10-year duration.	58,473	30,530	66,740	36,092	77,051	43,132	82,771	46,159	84,829	47,408
Permits for second generation	667	520	2270	1,890	11,217	10,130	18,356	16,478	19,592	17,040
Permits of indefinite duration	30,423	6,172	30,172	6113	25,007	5,455	20,842	4,829	19,250	4,476
Long-term residents	739	403	1181	545	8,082	2,066	12,849	3,015	14,755	3,340
Total permits of long duration	**90,302**	**37,625**	**100,363**	**44,640**	**121,357**	**60,783**	**134,818**	**70,481**	**138,426**	**72,264**
Total stay permits for TCN	**297,924**	**262,437**	**292,460**	**262,292**	**288,837**	**261,824**	**298,800**	**273,569**	**298,830**	**273,744**

Source: Ministry of Interior database upon request. For 2016 data date back to September 29.

Currently there is an aim to bring all long term stay permits under the EU long term resident status (L4251/14, no 138) and for this reason 10-year permits are no longer automatically updated, as they used to be. They are by contrast converted to the EU long term resident status when the conditions are met.It is not clear why current policy unlike past practice is giving priority to the EU long term resident status which while beneficial for intra EU mobility purposes, it is not necessarily advantageous for those wishing to stay in Greece.

Regarding the settled population (see table and figure below), it is worth noting that from 2012 until 2014 total stay permits presented a small decrease, while stay permits of long duration for the same period increased. From 2014 until 2016 long duration permits continue rising and total stay permits show a small increase. In September 2016, the number of total stay permits reached 572,574, of which 210,690 were of long duration. The rate of long-term permits compared to total stay permits is rising significantly, but still account for 37% of the total valid permits (compared to 23% in 2012, 26% in 2013, 33% in 2013 and 36% in 2015). The most populous type of log term permits are the 10-year and indefinite duration, and that women are less represented than men when it comes to long-term stay permits.

5. Labour Market Participation of Immigrants at Times of Crisis

Migrant Employment per Sector

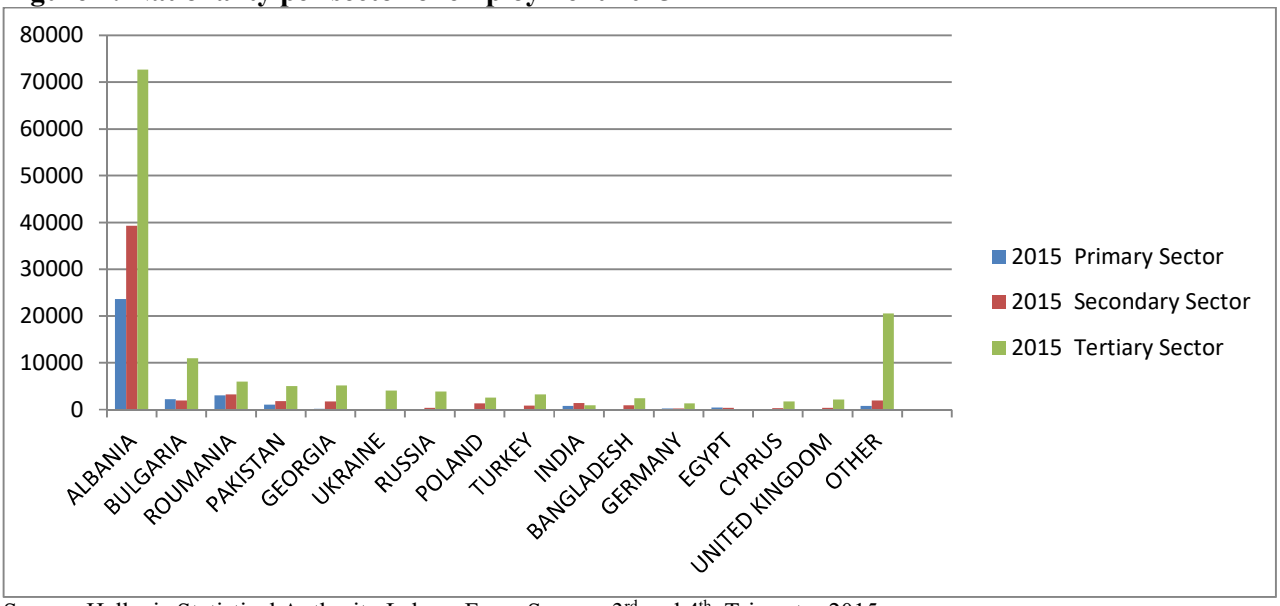
Before, analysing current data and figures on the sectors of employment some remarks on this issue concerning the evolution of migrant employment in the period 2008-2013 is in order.

Year 2013 marks an important change in the distribution of migrant workers among the three sectors. The percentage of migrants working in the primary sector doubles in 2013 compared to 2008 (13.5% in 2013, instead of 5.4% in 2008). Migrant employment in the secondary sector falls sharply reflecting reflects the overall decrease of activity in that sector (from 49.6% in 2008 to 29.1% in 2013). Finally migrant employment increases in the tertiary sector from 45% in 2008 to 57.3% in 2013.

In absolute numbers, the primary sector created 15,500 new jobs for migrants in the first trimester of 2013, while during the same trimester 90,600 and 6,400 jobs were lost in the secondary and tertiary sectors. In 2013 the number of migrants employed in construction was only 43,000 when the equivalent number for 2008 had been 114,700 (Zografakis, 2014).

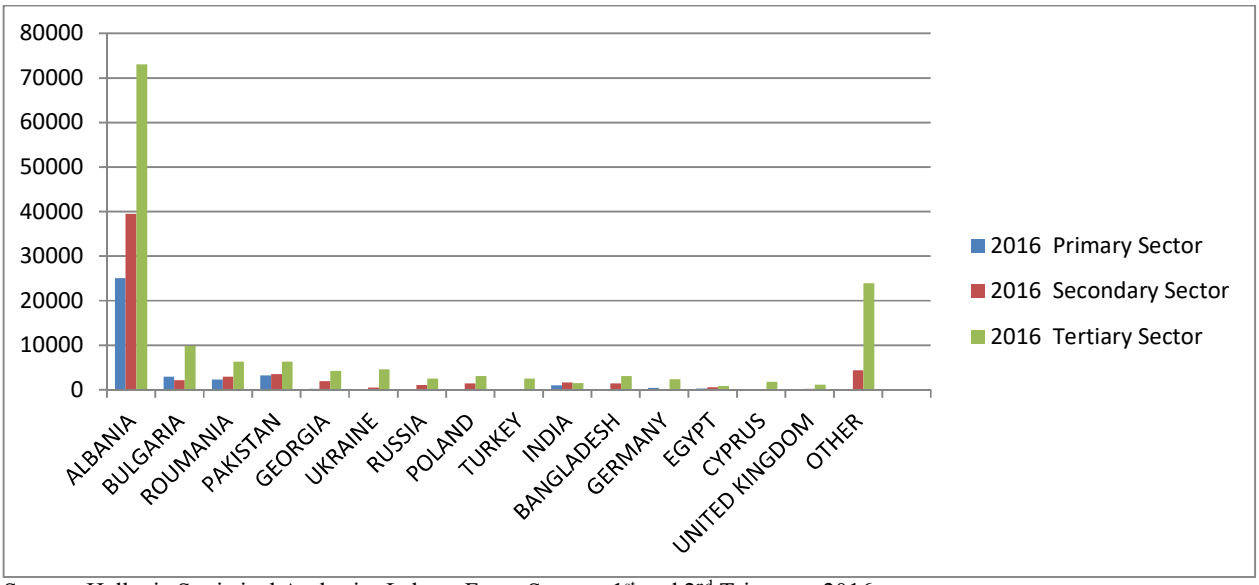
This trend is confirmed in the period 2015-2016 when migrants are mainly occupied in the tertiary sector, with a large representation of Albanians, in all three sectors for both years.

Figure 7: Nationality per sector of employment 2015*



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority Labour Force Survey, 3rd and 4th Trimester 2015.

Figure 8: Nationality per sector of employment 2016*



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority Labour Force Survey, 1st and 2nd Trimester 2016.

Unemployment Rate among TCNs

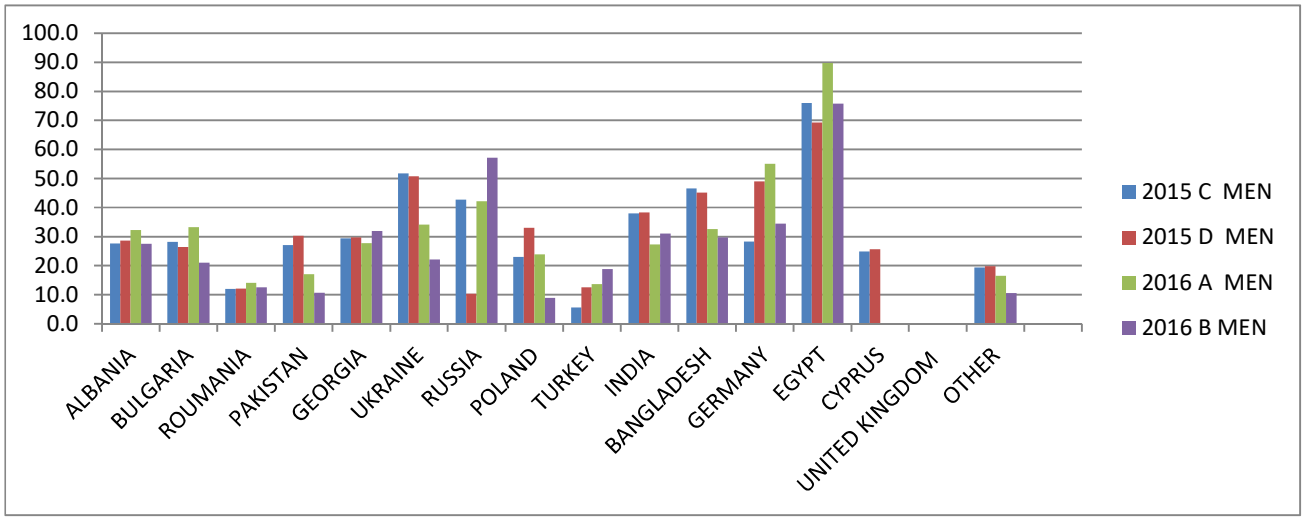
Unemployment rates for non-nationals present a small decrease during the last 12 months (second half of 2015 and first half of 2016) from 29.4% to 28.1%. However this decrease hides a sharp increase of unemployment at the turn of the year (end 2015/start 2016). Unemployment of women TCNs is higher than that of men throughout the period.

Table 13: Unemployment rate of non-nationals per gender, 2015*-2016*

Trimester per Year	Men	Women	Total
2015 C	27,4	30,1	**29,4**
2015 D	28,2	34	**30,8**
2016 A	29,3	40,4	**34,1**
2016 B	24,9	32,6	**28,1**

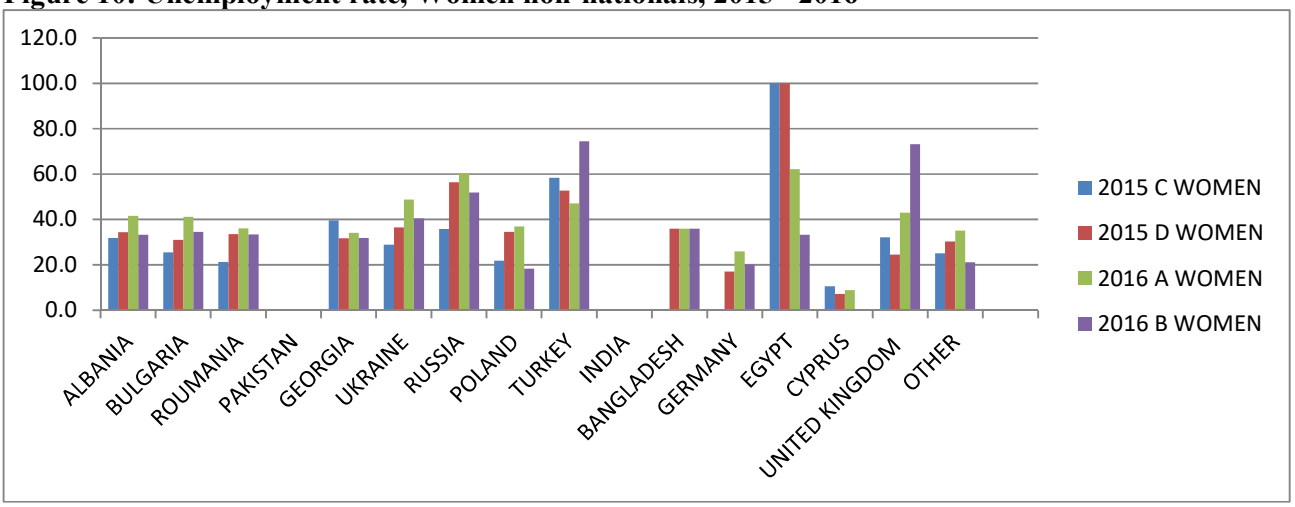
Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), Labour Force Survey 3rd and 4th Trimester of 2015, and 1st and 2nd Trimester of 2016.

Figure 9: Unemployment rate, Men non-nationals, 2015*-2016*



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority Labour Force Survey, 3rd and 4th Trimester of 2015, 1st and 2nd Trimester of 2016.

Figure 10: Unemployment rate, Women non-nationals, 2015*-2016*



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority Labour Force Survey, 3rd and 4th Trimester of 2015, 1st and 2nd Trimester of 2016.

6. Recent Developments in Greek Migration and Asylum Policy

During 2016 evolutions that occured in the different borders of Greece challenged more than ever before the asylum and migration policy of the country as well as indeed the entire EU to the point of endangering the Schengen no-internal-border zone and indeed the very unity of the EU.

Although the majority of the arrivals for 2015 had occured in Greece, only 1.5% of the people transiting claimed asylum in the country[10], as they were aiming to go to another European country. Syrians and Afghans in particular who constituted the bulk of the people on the move through the Balkan route did not wish to apply for asylum, due to the significant lack of support measures in Greece, such as accommodation, food, language training as well as the scarcity of jobs. However this has changed as moving on is not possible, relocation takes time and there is always a fear of being returned to Turkey.

6.1 Developments in Border Management

The management of the EUs southeastern external border has been under the spotlight since 2012. Greece has beefed up its border controls since 2007 in particular and again even more in 2012 through the Ooperation Shield (Aspida). The first reception system established by Law 3907/2011 has been transformed in April 2015 by what the EU Commission established as the 'Hotspot''approach, in its proposal for a European Agenda on Migration[11]. Identification, registration and fingerprinting of incoming migrants are procedures that take place in the five hotspots that operate in the islands[12], for the purposes of screening and channeling the new comers to the adequate procedures[13].

The developments that followed, that is the sharp increase of arrivals at the Greek-Turkish sea borders, the provisional 'opening' of the borders that were leading to other EU countries, and finally the closure of the Balkan route, have been followed by the EU-Turkey Agreement. These recent evolutions have had their effects on that specific border and therefore on Greece, which became rapidly from a country of transit to a country of *containment* (AIRE, ECRE report). The reduced options for moving onwards, of more than 60,000 refugees and migrants[14] that reached the country before the 20th of March, came to challenge the policy responses so far.

From an emergency approach of providing short term services Greece has henceforth to implement longer term measures, in order to respond to migrants and refugees that have no option to leave. In March 2016, Greek authorities prepared an emergency action plan in order to address the emerging problems of accommodation for 100,000 refugees and migrants. The provisions made from the action plan forsee that 50,000 among them would be hosted in

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[10]Asylum service , Asylum statistics 2015,applications lodged in 2015.

[11] As the Agenda suggests: The 'Hotspot' approach has been one of the pillars that the Agenda establishes: where the European Asylum Support Office, Frontex and Europol will work on the ground with frontline Member States to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants. The work of the agencies will be complementary to one another. Those claiming asylum will be immediately channelled into an asylum procedure where EASO support teams will help to process asylum cases as quickly as possible. For those not in need of protection, Frontex will help Member States by coordinating the return of irregular migrants. Europol and Eurojust will assist the host Member State with investigations to dismantle the smuggling and trafficking networks. For more info on the Agenda refer to EUROPA, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Commitee and the Committee of the Regions. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf, consulted on 3 October.

[12] Hotspots are operating in Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos. For more info see http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/greece_state_of_play_report_en.pdf

[13] Potential asylum seekers, vulnerables, to be returned etc.

[14] Acaps http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/160324_greece-analysis-report.pdf

reception facilities, and the other 50,000 in hotels or other centers near big cities. Furthermore, those that arrived after the 20th of March[15], face a different treatment, as they are detained in inadequate conditions on the islands where they landed, while for most of them is pending a potential return in Turkey[16]. Considering the situation[17] UNHCR, MSF and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), which have been working in the Greek islands suspended their activities and raised their concerns vis à vis the transformation of hotspots into dangerously overcrowded, police-run detention facilities (UNHCR 22/03/2016, MSF 22/03/2016, NRC 23/03/2016).[18]

In order to face a quickly escalating emergency in late February 2016, the Greek government has establsed on 4 March 2016 a Coordinating Body for the Management of the Refugee Crisis. This is an interministerial body headed by the Deputy Minister of National Defence, and composed by the ministries of National Defence, Citizen's Protection, Migration Policy, Infrastracture – Transports and Networks, Marine, and the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace. The task that this body bears is to organise and coordinate the management of the flows, and the establishment of reception centres[19].

Border management has been further militarised with the support of a NATO coalition fleet. The latter responding to request for help from Turkey, Greece and Germany, and ordered military ships into the Aegean Sea on the 11th of February 2016. The NATO coalition fleet is tasked to conduct "reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance of illegal crossings in the stretch of sea between Turkey and Greece" (Garelli, Tazzioli, June 2016). It is the first time that warships are operating in both international waters and territorial Greek and Turkish ones, for the purpose of migration management in the EU's southeastern border. The NATO fleet provide with information the Greek and Turkish coast guards as well as the EU Border Agency Frontex assisting them on the location of migrant dinghies and on push back operations.

A new element in the border managment is the fact that NATO has an enlarged jurisdiction in the international waters as well as the Greek and Turkish territorial ones. The NATO fleet patrols areas that EU authorities did not have the official jurisdiction to be present.

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[15] Acaps referes to 1,419 persons arriving in March 2016.

[16]The majority of them will likely be returned to Turkey where protection concern are high (HRW 23/11/2015, UNHCR 11/2009)(Acaps, March 2016)

[17] For more on the situation of reception sites and detention facilities see Amnesty International Trapped in Greece, available at https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/07/trapped-in-greece-48000-stranded-in-dire-conditions/

[18]Unfortunately the events in Moria that occured at the time of writing of the report (the 19 of September 2016) confirm these concerns. As the Guardia reports: Thousands of refugees detained at one of Greece's biggest camps, on the island of Lesbos, have fled the capacity amid scenes of mayhem after some reportedly set fire to it, local police have said [...] The disturbances, it reported, had been fuelled by frustration over the notoriously slow pace with which asylum requests were being processed. A rumour, earlier in the day, that Greek authorities were preparing to send possibly hundreds back to Turkey – in a bid to placate mounting frustration in Germany over the long delays – was enough to spark the protests (For more see https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/19/thousand-flee-as-blaze-sweeps-through-moria-refugee-camp-in-greece)

[19] It is necessary to notice here that UNHCR in cooperation with the municipalities offers accommodation, focusing on relocation applicants, vulnerable persons, asylum seekers and also family reunification applicants. Under this scheme, UNHCR counts actually 8,636 places in camps or rented flats with an estimation to reach the 20,000 places.

6.2 Developments in Asylum Policy

The closing down of the Balkan route and even more the EU-Turkey Agreement have obliged the Greek governbment to hastily adopt a new law (L 4375/2016), amending the processing of asylum claims, on 3 April 2016[20]. The Law mainly establishes what has been agreed in the EU-Turkey Agreement, with key issue the introduction of an exceptional regime applicable at the borders. The Law introduces several reforms vis à vis the asylum procedure and international protection, the border regime andfirst reception, and finally the labour rights of beneficiaries of international protection. The introduction of an exceptional border regime is a nodal point in the amendments of the Law and will be discussed further below.

The Law foresees the transposition of the revised Asylum Procedures Directive in order to replace older provisions and introduce a regulation process for cases under the 'old procedure'[21]. That means practically that asylum seekers who have had asylum claims pending for over 5 years will automatically receive a 2-year residence permit on humanitarian grounds[22] . This comes as solution for the backlog cases (18,500) pending under this 'old procedure' (AIRE ECRE).

Modifications vis à vis the appeals procedure succeeded the Law only shortly after its entry into force. The Greek Parliament initially rejected the announcement of these modifications deriving by the European Commission, with the justification that they were submitted too late in the procedure. They had been subsequently urgently introduced to a different bill, and therefore passed as an amendment tabled to a different legislative bill[23]. This legislative procedure[24], has been highly critised by experts including members of the government as it foresees the restructuring of the Appeals Committees with a view to reducing the possibility for appellants to request a hearing[25]. At the same time, the Law has established an exceptional border procedure[26], and enabled EASO officials to participate actively during the interviews of the applicants[27].

An initiative decided by the Asylum service (with the support from UNHCR and EASO) in order to tackle the inefficiency of the asylum system to deal with the rising backlog of applications has been the pre-registration process. More particularly this process managed to preregister with success applications for asylum, as well as relocations and family reunifications. The operation was declared completed on the 1 August. the In the period from June 9 to July 30 a total 27,592 persons have been pre-registered. Of those 54% originated from Syria, 27% from Afghanistan, 13% from Iraq, 3% from Pakistan and 2% from Palestine.

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[20]Law 4375/2016, Official Gazette 51/A/3-4-2016, available at: http://goo.gl/xkdhWo

[21]PD 112/2010

[22]Unless they wish to continue the asylum procedure

[23]Draft Law "Legal framework for the establishment of regimes for Strengthening Private Investments for the regional and economic development of the country – Establishment of Development Council and other provisions", 2 June 2016. For a more detailed discussion on that see AIRE ECRE Report 2016.

[24]Which does not constitute a novelty

[25]It introduces a restructuring of the Appeals Committees to comprise of two judges of administrative courts and a member designated by UNHCR, instead of three members selected by a Selection Committee, AIRE,ECRE, *ibid.*

[26] We will refer to the exceptional border procedure in the chapter of the border mabagement.

[27] That way the Law provides for the clarification of EASO's role, as with the previous framework the EASO was in principle limited to assisting the Asylum Service. The role of EASO has been criticised as non transparent. For more on that see AIRE, ECRE *ibid.*

Among them 1,225 unaccompanied minors with a 47% originating from Afghanistan, 36% from Syria and 12% from Iraq[28] were registered.

The preregistration process enabled the first registration, that is taking down the basic personal details of potential applicants. This first registration is followed by an appointment with the Asylum Service (fixing of a date), in order for the preregistered to lodge an asylum application.

Regarding the challenges of the operation itself AIRE and ECRE noticed in their report that the process adds further administrative layers to an already complex asylum procedure; and this entails the risk to make it more confusing for the refugees. At the same time fears are expressed that without a parallel robust expansion of national asylum authorities a new backlog will emerge[29].

6.3 A Special Asylum Regime at the Borders

A noticeable development in Greece has been the establishment of a special border regime for asylum processing as per Article 60(4) of law 4375/2016, which is in contrast with other provisions on the asylum procedure. More specifically, the Ministries of Interior and Defence may activate exceptional measures in cases of large numbers of arrivals lodging asylum applications at the border.

These exceptional measures include as AIRE, ECRE report:
- The possibility for police authorities and unarmed soldiers to conduct the registration of asylum applications.
- The possibility for European Asylum Support Office (EASO) officials and interpreters to assist the Greek authorities in registration and the conduct of interviews.
- An expedient version of the border procedure which lasts no more than 14 days at first and second instance. This entails a 1-day deadline for asylum seekers to prepare for the interview and a maximum 3-day deadline for lodging an appeal[30].

The special border regime is a worrying development as it curtails access to asylum for those arriving at the EU borders. The vote of the EU Parliament on July 2016 on the regulation establishing the European Border and Coast Guard Agency[31], laid by Frontex, is an initiative aligned with the idea of special border regimes, and is also indicative of what developments to expect in the future.

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[28] Source UNHCR figures, available at : http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/documents.php?page=1&view=grid&Country%5B%5D=83&Search=%23pre-registration+statistical+data%23

[29] As they report: Even after the completion of the pre-registration programme, a crusial question remains the fate of asylum seekers after their claims have been lodged, bearing mind an already rising bocklodge of 10.217 applications as of the end of May 2016 (Asylum service statistics) (AIRE ECRE Report 2016).

[30] The exceptional border procedure cannot be applied to vulnerable asylum seekers and to persons falling within the family provisions of the Dublin III Regulation. *(AIRE ECRE report*)

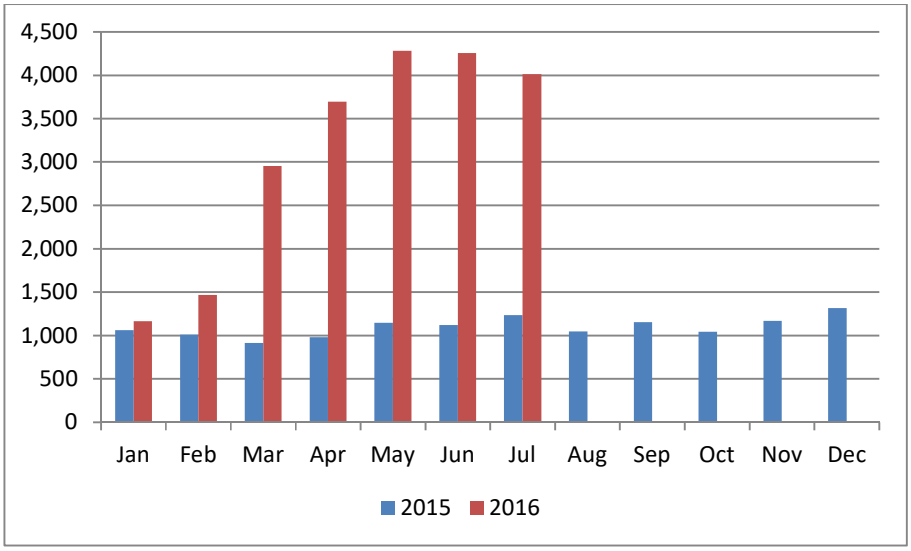
[31] Frontex welcomes European Parliament vote on European Border and Coast Guard, available at: http://frontex.europa.eu/pressroom/news/frontex-welcomes-european-parliament-vote-on-european-border-and-coast-guard-ABISlt

6.4 Asylum Seeking Recognition Rates

The evolutions briefly discussed above, have had visible effects on Greece's asylum system, as a sharp increase on asylum applications has emerged in July 2016. Asylum applications counted for 4,013 for this month whereas the monthly average for 2015 has been 1,100, presenting that way a percentage change of 264.8% (see Figure 11).

Among these asylum applications, 2,543 have been lodged by men in 2016 while, the respective monthly average for 2015 is 822 asylum application. Another 1470 have been lodged by women in 2016, while, the respective monthly average for 2015 is 278.

Figure 11: Lodged Asylum Applications 2015-2016



Source: Graph compiled by authors on the basis of data collected fromUNHCR/ Greece data snapshot 2 October 2016

The statistical data on 1st instance procedures for 2016[32], show a number of 12,370 backlog cases and a number of 4,013 new applications as recorded in July 2016. Refugee status has been assigned to 151 people, while subsidiary protection to 25. At the same time, 479 persons have seen their applications rejected during the 1st instance procedure in a total of 655 decisions, determining that way the recognition rate in 26,6%. Furthermore the number of interruptions, resignations and decisions on inadmissibility[33] is 1643, while the pending cases as of August 31 of 2016 count for 15,038.

Asylum recognition rates for Syrians stand currently at 98,3%, for Palestinians at 96%, Iraquis 68,4% and Afghans 48,9%. In comparison to 2015, recognition rates were similar for Syrians, whereas there is a decrease in recognition rates for Iraquis and Afghans. A notworthy development in 2016 is the emergence of Palestinians, that present one of the

[32] Data for 2016 ar up to June 6.

[33]The decisions on inadmissibility can take place a) because the person is under a relocation program or under the Dublin regulation, b) because a readmission procedure is pending.

highest recognition rates[34].

The recognition rate for Palestinians in the first instance is presented almost as high as for Syrians. Nonetheless, in the preregistration process they present a low rate of 2%. That means that even though they present a high recognition rate, they do not seem to register that much as potential asylum or relocation applicants. What are the possible reasons for that?One possible answer could be that, the recognition rate of Palestinians is presented that high because even though most of the decisions assessed a refugee status, the number of the processed cases in comparison with the applications is really low. In a number of 102 lodged applications only 7 cases have been processed.

Table 14: Asylum seeking recognition rates, First instance, 2015-2016

Status\Year	2015	2016
Refugees	11,8	3,8
Subsidiary Protection	0,9	0,6
Negative	32,3	16,7
Total	100	100

Note: Compilation of the authors, percentages calculated on the basis of lodged applications. Data available at http://asylo.gov.gr/?page_id=615, consulted on 3 October 2016.

Table 15: Asylum seeking recognition rates, Second instance

Status\Year	2015	2016
Refugees	11,2	N/A
Subsidiary Protection	4,7	N/A
Negative	84,1	N/A
Total	100	100

Note: Data available at http://asylo.gov.gr/?page_id=615 , consulted on 3 October 2016.

6.5 Moving onwards: Relocation and Family Reunification

The rising inflow of third country nationals in Greece (and Italy), the vast majority of whom is in need of international protection[35] urged for more support to these countries. The provisional response of the EU to this has been the Emergency Relocation Mechanism, decided on September 22 of 2015[36]. Following the European Commission's proposals, in an effort to lighten the asylum systems of Frontline Member States and provide protection, 160,000 asylum seekers are to be relocated from these States. More particularly 66,4000 persons are to be relocated from Greece and 39,000 from Italy until September 2017. The nationalities that are eligible for relocation under this mechanisme, are those with at least a 75% recognition rate[37] across the EU[38].

[34] Since 2013 Palestinians did not appear in the recognition rating as a seperate group. Data available at http://asylo.gov.gr/?page_id=615

[35] According to UNHCR 88% of the arrivals come frot the world's top 10 refugee-producing countries. UNHCR, available at : http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83

[36]Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2015/1601/oj

[37] It is important to note here that this rate is according to average quarterly statistics, and each time some nationalities risk to be excluded from relocation. This is for example the case of the Iraqi nationals, whose

This scheme while ambitious in its conception and expressing a strong political will on the part of the President of the European Commission to enforce burden sharing, has had so far rather disappointing results. The scheme has been fraught with implementation problems which have had to do with the actual pre-registration and processing of people upon first reception in Greece (and Italy) but also with a certain reluctance on the part of the destination member states and what has been called 'shopping lists' of the people to relocate (e.g. most vulnerable pople like single mothers and children, victims of trafficking, or highly educated persons). The European Commission pointed as problematic the absent or unjustified grounds of rejecting relocation requests[39]. However, the Greek Asylum Service explained that following up on rejections of relocation is problematic due to the overall design of the relocation scheme, as the sovereign right of each Member State to refuse to relocate asylum seekers cannot be challenged (AIRE, ECRE report). Naturally the whole issue has been further complicated by fears for terrorist infiltration among the asylum seekers from Syria in particular.

As of September 2016, Greek authorities had formally pledged for relocation of 9,776 persons while the total number of persons that have been successfully relocated so far stands at 4,455 (compared to a total of 63,302 that the European Commission had pledged for being relocated by September 2017)[40]. September 2016 has recorded the highest number (1,202 persons) of relocations from Greece so far, which is twice as high as during the previous reporting period[41]. Nevertheless this remains a rather slow pace as with the current rate, it would take 18 years to relocate all asylum seekers currently stranded in Greece (Amnesty International 2016)[42].

It is important to clarify that relocation is available only to people who have entered Greece during the period between 16 September 2015 and 19 March 2016 and while unpopular among people on the move at first, it has since been reconsidered as the alternative is to stay put in Greece with little prospects for employment.[43].

Another important legal route for people to move onwards from Greece to the EU is familly reunification as foreseen in the Dublin III Regulation[44]. The use of Dublin procedure in this respect has been one of the most successful in the EU, as the number of outgoing requests has been processed swiftly. In 2015 a number of 1,117 outgoing requests have been issued to

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average recognition reate has fell to 73,2% in the first quarter of 2016. Eurostat, First Insance decisions, (AIRE, ECRE Report 2016)

[38] UNHCR EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism, as of 21 September 2016

[39] European Commission 18, May 2016 available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1763_en.htm

[40]The number of successfully relocated persons as by September 2016 for Italy is 1,196 out of 39,600 that is the commitment of the EU decided on September 2015.

[41] European Commision, press release 28 September 2016, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3183_en.htm

[42] Amnesty International, September 2016 Greece: "Our hope is broken", European paralysis leaves thousands of refugees stranded in Greece, available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur25/4843/2016/en/, consulted on October 9 of 2016.

[43] For a more ilustrated view on that please refere to ACAPS, Refugees/Migrants Crisis in Europe, Situation update, Greece March 2016.

[44]Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or stateless person (recast), *OJ* 2013 L180/31. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32013R0604

other countries by the Greek Asylum Service, and 847 transfers have been accomplished, mainly to Germany, Sweden and Switzerland[45].

6.6 Policies Addressing Irregular Status

While 2016 has been a year of containment and actual reduction of access to asylum for new arrivals in Greece, a positive development needs also be noted, notably the concession of a 2-year temporary stay permit to all people whose asylum application was pending for at least five years under the 'old asylum regime' (which was valid till the introduction of the 2011 law but which actually operated until the summer of 2013 when the law of 2011 became effective), on humanitarian grounds.

More precisely the article 22 of the L4375/2016 foresees that the Secretary-General, Ministry of Inrerior and Administrative Reconstruction is granding a stay permit to asylum seekers whose asylum claim card is into force; whose application had been lodged up to five years before the entry into force of the current provision and the examination of which is pending in second instance. In this case, the applicant automatically receives a two-year stay permit on humanitarian grounds as defined by L4251/2014, article 19. According to data provided by the Ministry of the Interior, 4,890 persons have benefit from this provision since April 2016. The main nationalities under this category of permits are Bangladeshis, Georgians and Pakistanis (see table below).

Table 16: Stay permits on humanitarian grounds (art. 22. Law 4376/2016) by nationality

Bangladesh	1,299
Georgia	1,103
Pakistan	1,066
Nigeria	263
Senegal	150
China	75
Armenia	71
Ethiopia	62
Ghana	59
Kenya	59
Other	683
Total	**4,890**

Source: Ministry of Interior database upon request. Data refer to the period from the 3rd of Arpil 2016 (entry into force of the relevant proposition) until the 12th of December 2016.

The Ministry of education together with the Ministry of migration, presented in September 2016 a common plan for the education of refugee chindren and their integration into the Greek educational system. The common plan aims at facilitating access to education for all

[45] Data available until 2015. Eurostat outgoing Dublin requests and Outgoing Dublin transfers, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database

minors living in accommodation structures of the country. More specifically the plan forsees initiatives for preschoolers to be educated through schemes organised in the camps (as parents might feel uncomfortable with sending them to nearby maternal schools) while children in primary and secondary education are expected to be integrated in mainstream schools.

7. Citizenship Acquisitions

For 2014-2015 a significant decrease is observed in the naturalisations of Co-ethnics, as well as the naturalisations of other ethnicities, or other provisions. Whereas the acquisition of citizenship in the grounds of birth or study seems to regain ground from 2014 that reached zero, and finally the under-age children of naturalised adults present a small decrease. Overall between 2014-2015 the acquisition of Greek citizenship showed a significant decrease, presentint the lowest rate since 2011.

Table 17: Acquisition of Greek Citizenship (2014-2015*)

	2014	**2015***
Naturalisations of Co-ethnics	15,791	8,555
Naturalisations of other ethnicities	2,019	1,454
Birth or study in Greece	0	17
Other provisions	2,029	1,194
Under-age children of naturalised adults (parents)	1,990	1,617
Total	**21,829**	**12,837**

Source : Databese of the Ministry of the Interior upon request. The data for 2015 will be finalised at the end of December

8. Incidents of Racism and Racist Violence

During the last few yearse, Greek society has been characterized by a paradoxical coexistence of violence that targets refugees and migrants and at the same time, large solidarity movements directed towards them. This trend together with institutional and legislative developments mostly for the year 2014 has been exposed in the report of 2015.

Although policy initiatives aimed atcombatting racist violence took place in 2015, there are several issues that need be mentioned for the entire period 2015-2016. First and foremost, the Hellenic Police issued a circular on 'Combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination in policing' on 8/11/2014 whichestablished the obligation for law enforcement agents to investigate racist motivations in all cases prescribed by the law. The Greek Violence Recording Network (RVRN) in its annual report for 2015, notes that in Athens, the Department of Combating Racist Violence in the General Hellenic Police Headquarters, deals

with these incidents regardless of the specific area of the crime. Nonetheless, reasonable doubts are still raised as to whether all law enforcement officials are aware of their responsibility to investigate racist motive without prejudice.

From January to December 2015 RVRN recorded 273 incidents of racist violence with more than 300 victims. Among these incidents, 75 happened against migrants or refugees. Refugees and migrants have been proven more vulnerable to serious attacks by their employers. Seven incidents related to the refugee crisis and occurred at border areas.

Interestingly, incidents for 2015 are higher in numbers, in comparison to 2014, although the refugee crisis does not seem to have increased racist violence for 2015. One reason that explains the above is that the RVRN has expanded its increase and more incidents are been recorded. Two last noteworthy elements to highlight. First, that the involvement of law enforcement officials in recorded incidents remains alarming. And second, that for the first time the RVRN recorded one incident of racist violence against Roma children.

The trial against Golden Dawn continues after a long interruption due to a prolonged strike of lawyers in the country. The trial is been monitored by the 'Golden Dawn Watch' an initiative oganised by the Hellenic League for Human Rights, the Greek Observatory against Fascism and Racist Speech in the Media, the Antifascist League of Athens and Piraeus, and the City of Athens Migrants' Integration Council. The purpose of this initiative is to keep Golden Dawn and its actions in the light, providing information and analysis on a national and international level[46].

Some recent developments as presented in the press show orchestrated reactions of parents'associations against the presence of refugee children in their children's schools[47]. Three similar incidents occurred within a few days. Furthermore a persecution action after claims of 'hazing' in refugees took place at Omonoia Police Department. The courts' intervention was caused by complaints of humiliating behavior towards underage refugees by policemen at that specific Police Department[48].

Tensions between locals and stranded refugees is increasing on the islands. An opinion based article describes the situation and criticizes the European poticies and responsibilities[49]. Finally shocking details of the rape of a 16-year-old Pakistani by four teenagers of the same nationality[50] derive as a sad sideffect of the situation mentioned above. The incident took place in the hot spot of Moria, where minor and unaccompanied refugees are hosted.

9. Emigration of Greeks abroad

It is difficult to have accurate information on Greek emigration abroad, as those that are leaving, are not required to register, and therefore it is difficult to find the required data.

[46] Golden Watch, available at: http://goldendawnwatch.org/?page_id=421&lang=en

[47] The parents association drafted an open letter to addressee to the Minister of Education, or came to common decisions during assemblies.

[48] For further info see http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/syrian-refugee-children-arrested-toy-gun-greece-detained-beaten-strip-naked-amnesty-international-a7341206.html

[49] For further info see http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/09/greeks-refuge-islands-feel-abandoned-europe-160929112607274.html

[50] For further info see http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1500104368 (in Greek)

However, recent research[51] has shown more evidence on that issue and in the following paragraphs an overview of their main findings is presented.

Greece is actually going through what has been caracterised as its third phase of massive emigration[52]. What makes this phase different than the previous two, is the age, the educational level and the profesional experience of the emigrants. From 2008 until 2013 almost 223,000 young people, Greek residents, aged between 25-39 years old, left Greece, directing themselves to other EU countries looking for work, or better employment conditions. According to data, 75% of emigrants are college graduates, and one third of them are postgraduates or medical and engineering graduates (Labrianidis, Pratsinakis, 2016). Research results suggest that the new emigrants are young, unmarried and highly educated. Year 2010 is a marking date as before that the mobility of highly educated Greek residents could not be considered high in numbers. After 2010 this is changing significantly. From almost 190,000 Greek graduates that live abroad, 140,000 of them left after 2010. The post-2010 period is presented as comparable in size with the post-war decades. Although with significant differences as far as it concerns its quality characteristics, as it is taking place simuktaneously with ongoing immigration to or through the country, and is much more diverse than in the past (Labrianidis Pratisnakis 2016).

An assessment of the overall emigration shows that an annual outgoing flow of 38,000 persons in the years 2008 and 2009, which has doubled in two years (2010-2011), and further increased to 104,000 persons in 2013. The total number of emigrants for the period 2008-2013 stands thus at 427,000 persons.

According to the national statistical service (ELSTAT) 187,000 non-Greek citizens, residing in Greece, left permanently the country in the period 2010-2013. In 2014 the overall number of immigrants leaving Greece has been estimated at 106,800 persons (Lazaretou, 2016/ ELSTAT). For 2014 and 2015 research shows a lower rate, however the trends for what follows indicate the possibility that emigration will continue in the years to come (Labrianidis, Pratsinakis).

The outputs of the Labrianidis and Pratsinakis research have also shown new elements as far as it concerns the socio demographic features of recent Greek emigration. For the first time in the Greek emigraiton history, people leave the country at an age higher than 40 (12% of the emigrants). This is indicative of the fact that a large part of the people are emigrating pushed out of need and not as a result of a choice. Unenployment is one of the reasons for emigration, while at the same time it is not the only one.

Although, high income and high education level are the backgournds that provide more emigrants[53], there is an important rise of people with lower education and lower income background that emigrate. Greek emigrants come in their majority from urban areas (79%), followed by those coming from rural areas (14%) and finally from suburban areas (7%). Research (op. cit.) showed that people with middle and low educational backgrounds

[51]The last years a significant number of research has been conducted for tha qualitative and quantitative caracteristics of the phenomenon. To mention some Lazaretou 2016, Labrianidis and Pratsinakis 2016, ICAP group 2015,2016, Endeavor Greece 2014 and EUI 2013).

[52]The migration phases refere to these time periodes that present a sharp and large increase of outgoing flows. The first phase occurred between 1903 and 1917, the second between 1960 and 1972, and the third is undergoing sarted in 2010 (Lazaretou 2016).

[53] It is important though to note here that the reasons of migration differ for the pre-crisis highly skilled emigrants and those who emigrated after 2010 (Labrianidis Pratsikakis).

emigrate to Britain and the Netherlands, making use of social networks that are established in these countries since earlier emigrations[54]. The more highly skilled chose mostly the UK or newer destinations such as Switzerland, making use of their personal networks. Eighty per cent(80%) of the total flows are directed towards EU countries, and of those about half to Britain and Germany (roughtly 25% each). Other main destination countries include in order of preference: The USA, Australia, France, the Netherlands and Sweden.

In the description and analysis that follows, the report is based on data for outgoing immigration from the Hellenic Statistical Authority. We should notice that the reason we present the data is in order to show the trends that characterise the outgoing migration from Greece. The tables presented below do not constitute an accurate representation of overall outgoing immigration from Greece, as information is besed solely on data that concern outgoing immigration from Greece to Germany, since data from other countries are not available. Germany has been choosen by the Hellenic Statistical Authority because it constitutes the most popular Greek emigrant destination for the years analysed[55].

The estimated numbers show a sharp increase of outgoing migrants from 2008 to 2014. Overall in 2008 seem to have emigrated from Greece 43,044 people, their number has been more than doubled for 2011 (92,404), reaching the highest level in 2012 (124,694). In the years 2013 and 2014 that followed, the number of outgoing immigrants more or less stabilizes – showing a small downward trend – and reaches respectively the 117,094 and 106,804 people. Another notworthy development is that older people's emmigration is increasing during the crisis.

In the tables that follow a more detailed presentation of the estimated numbers of outgoing migrants is attempted.

[54] These used to be former guestworker's destinations.

[55]For more info on the methodology see ELSTAT, http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SPO15/- (in Greek)

Table 18: Estimated outgoing* migrants per age group 2008-2014/ Men

Age Group	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
15-19	1,153	1,502	1,729	1,523	2,553	2,246	3,171
20-24	3,686	3,438	4,562	7,112	8,915	8,582	8,773
25-29	6,280	6,266	7,795	12,704	15,251	14,920	11,708
30-34	3,566	3,437	5,039	9,755	12,321	11,787	9,249
35-39	2,149	2,166	2,883	7,040	9,150	8,548	6,730
40-44	1,705	1,421	2,244	5,452	8,053	7,295	5,716
45-49	1,177	1,083	1,504	4,215	6,682	5,891	4,649
50-54	757	934	1,292	3,478	5,586	4,970	4,359
55-59	553	555	641	2,048	3,354	2,931	2,590

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, available at:http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SPO15/- , consulted on October 7. Note: information is based solely on data that concern outgoing immigration from Greece to Germany

Table 19: Estimated outgoing* migrants per age group 2008-2014/Women

Age Group	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
15-19	1,128	893	1,504	1,270	2,063	1,863	2,617
20-24	3,518	3,234	4,900	5,091	6,343	6,074	6,215
25-29	4,154	3,763	6,203	7,506	9,184	8,892	6,980
30-34	2,365	2,382	3,923	4,725	6,262	6,023	4,725
35-39	1,513	1,759	2,256	3,077	3,957	3,726	2,932
40-44	1,189	1,340	2,255	2,108	3,083	2,890	2,265
45-49	900	961	1,228	1,689	2,352	2,239	1,766
50-54	636	717	1,089	1,386	1,716	1,719	1,508
55-59	540	501	601	1,256	1,558	1,536	1,357

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, available at:http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SPO15/- , consulted on October 7. Note: information is based solely on data that concern outgoing immigration from Greece to Germany

10. Concluding Remarks

Greece is currently facing two contradictory migration challenges: on one hand it is the country most affected by the large refugee flows that the EU has been receiving during the last two years. On the other hand Greek citizens and non Greeks settled in Greece are leaving the countryin search of better jobs and life prospects in other member states.

Indeed, Greece found itself in the eye of the refugee strom registering nearly a million transit people in 2015. Dramatic changes in the EU policy have prompted the country to revisit its asylum system creating a special regime for border areas while at the same time seeking to grapple with an approximate number of 40,000 asylum seekers (and/or irregular migrants) 'trapped' in Greece waiting either for relocating or indeed for integrating in the country. The effort for processing as well as temporarily accommodating this pouplation has been huge in a country that is in the sixth year of a dramatic economic and financial crisis and where growth rates stand at nearly zero and unemployment rates at 25%.

On the other hand Greece is facing another wave of emigration of skilled and highly skilled person seeking employment in other member states and also in the USA and Australia. As relevant studies and statistical data start to emerge it turns out that more than 400,000 people have left Greece in search of better opportunities. Among them University graduates are over-represented and age cohorts include both younger and middle aged persons with families.

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