

# The EU Refugee Crisis in Numbers

January–August 2015



Euro-Med Monitor  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
الأورومتوسطي لحقوق الإنسان

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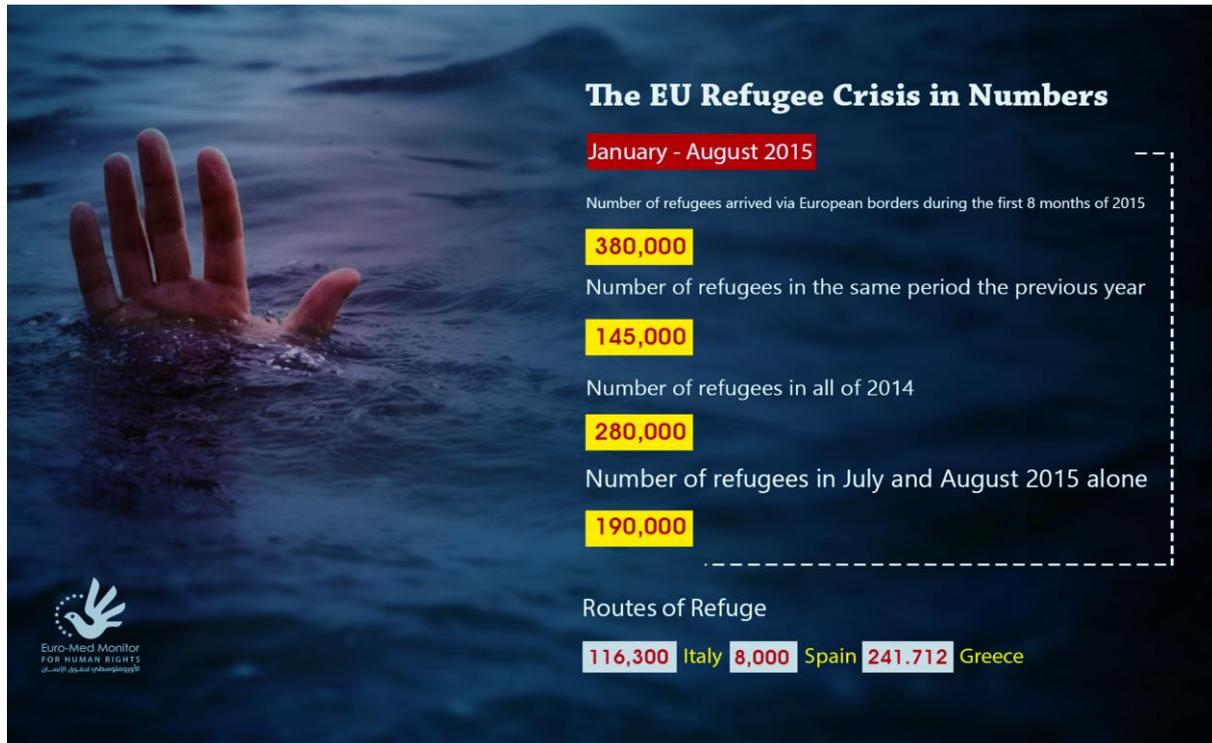
## Introduction

The influx of refugees and migrants attempting to enter the EU has recently reached an unprecedented level. July and August of 2015 marked the climax of this crisis, with surging numbers taking to the sea in particular in their quest for a better life.

In this report, Euro-Med highlights the most critical statistics that tell this story through August of 2015. We report the number of individuals who made it to European soil, the countries through which they entered and the tally of those drowned or otherwise lost while they tried to reach what they believed would be safe refuge.

These numbers constitute an urgent call to the member countries of the European Union to work together to end the shocking neglect and mistreatment of these desperate souls. European countries must collaborate to establish a fair mechanism to determine and assign proportional numbers of refugees for resettlement in each country.

Europe now has sufficient evidence that closing the borders and building walls will not stop those who are desperate for safety and a sustainable life for their families. This evidence must inspire European bodies to begin facilitating asylum seekers' immigration before they reach EU shores on death boats.



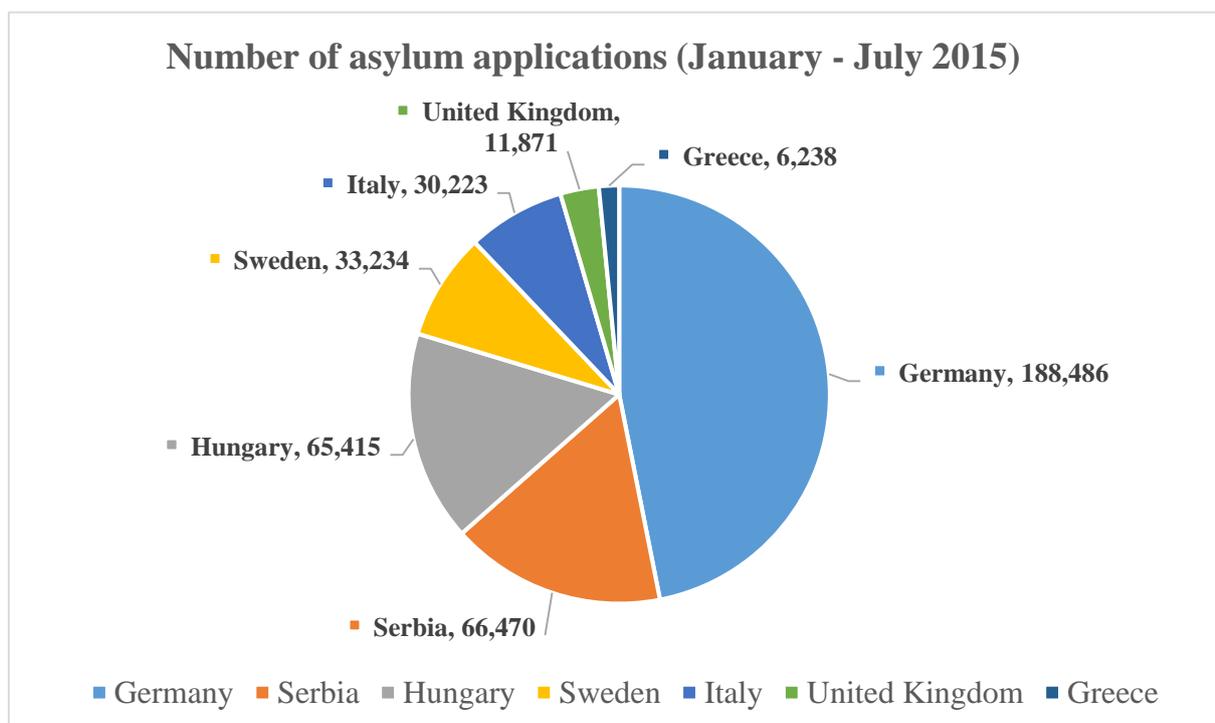
## Arrivals, January-August, 2015

- 380,000 refugees arrived via European borders during the first eight months of 2015. In the same period the previous year, just 145,000 refugees managed to make it to Europe, and in all of 2014, a total of 280,000 completed the journey to Europe.
- In July and August of 2015 alone, Euro-Med estimates that 190,000 refugees arrived in Europe. This is the highest recorded number of refugees that have sought asylum in Europe since the establishment of Frontex, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU. Most of these refugees sailed through the Mediterranean initially to Italy and Greece, while others crossed either through the border between Turkey and Bulgaria or through the sea to Spain.
- Refugees from Afghanistan and Syria, including Palestinians displaced once before after the creation of Israel, account for the largest number persons fleeing to Europe. They mostly arrive in Italy or Greece via Turkey or Libya.

## Asylum Requests to European Countries \*

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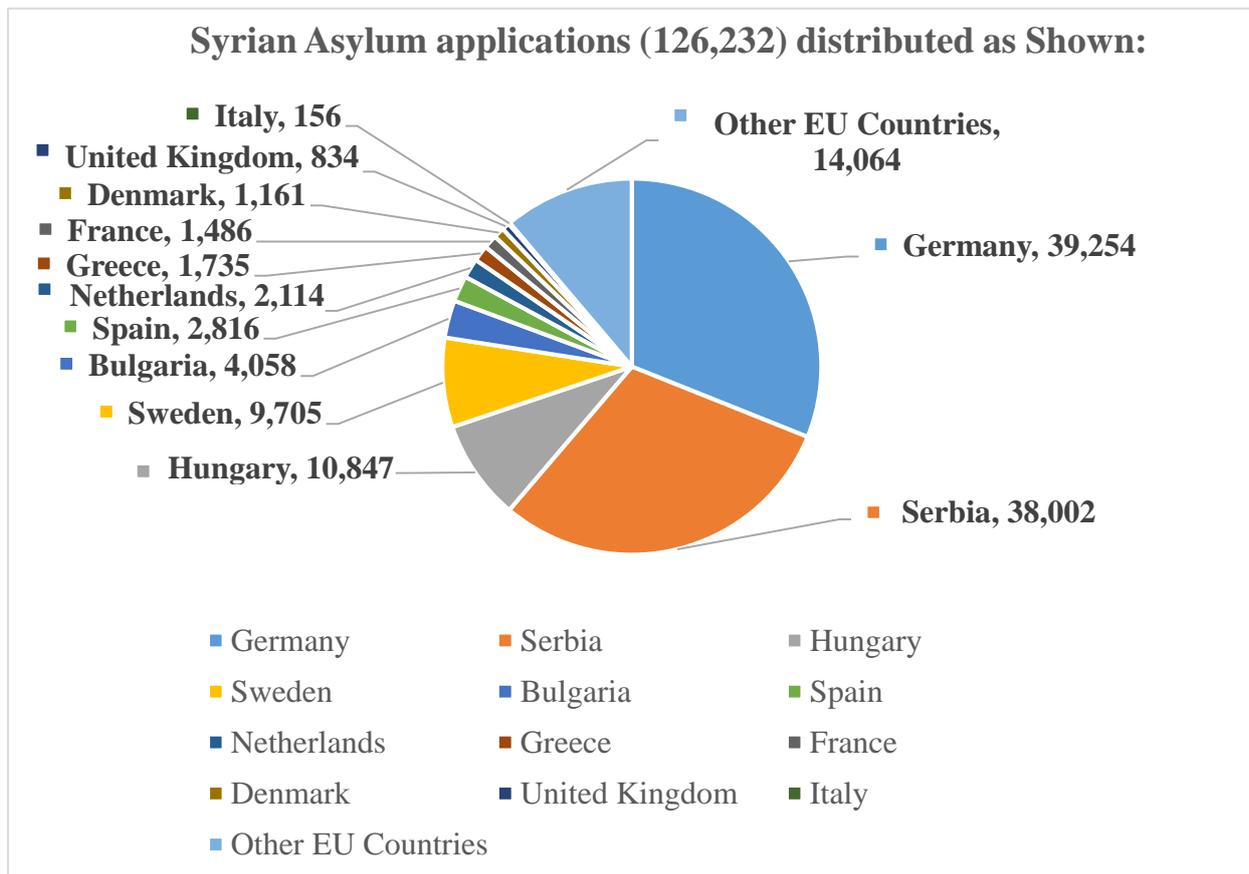
- The number of requests for asylum in Europe reached 583,758 by the end of July 2015. The countries that received the most requests were:



A total of 57,186 asylum requests were submitted to Turkey during the same period of 2015.

\*UNHCR and Eurostat references

- Between January and July of 2015, Syrians filed 126,232 asylum requests in Europe. The number of requests from Syrians since the breakout of the civil war in 2011 totaled 348,540 by the end of June this year.
- Syrian asylum requests made between January and July 2015 are:



Seventy-six Syrians submitted asylum requests to Turkey during the same period.

- The small number of asylum requests made to Italy and Greece, despite the fact that these countries serve as the most common initial point of entry, is not surprising. Other EU countries are richer and offer better treatment for refugees. Most refugees cross through these two countries, especially Greece, to Hungary and finally Austria and Germany. Western Balkan countries are considered the entry point for refugees going to Hungary, which registered 137,000 (29% from Afghanistan, 28% from Syria and 23% from Kosovo) between January and August 2015.

## The Drowned and Otherwise Lost

- The number of refugees who drowned in the Mediterranean while they attempted to reach Europe reached 2,824 by September 1, 2015.
- April was an especially tragic month, with the number of drowned and missing refugees soaring to 1,312, compared to only 61 during April of 2014. The next-most-tragic month was August, in which a total of 676 refugees drowned, compared to 629 in the same month the previous year.
- 430 refugees either drowned or lost on their way to Italy, while 2,300 drowned while hoping to reach Greece.

## Routes of Refuge

### 1. Greece

- Typically, refugees arrive in Greece through the eastern Mediterranean.
- During the first eight months of 2015, the number of refugees arriving at the border of Greece reached 241,712, which was six times as many as the number in the same period last year.
- During August alone, 127,000 refugees arrived in European countries through Greece. This number exceeded the total who arrived in Greece throughout 2014.
- Most refugees who flee to Greece are from Syria, including those who are Palestinian. Other refugees are from Afghanistan, Albania, Pakistan and Iraq.
- Syrian refugees constitute the majority of refugees in Greece, estimated at 60%. Afghan refugees accounted for another 25%, Pakistanis 5% and Iraqis 2.7%.

### 2. Italy

- Most refugees coming to Italy arrive through the middle Mediterranean.
- During the first eight months of 2015, the number of refugees arriving at the border of Italy reached 116,300. They mostly came from Eritrea, Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Euro-Med estimates that a 47,000 refugees came to Italy in the month of August alone.
- 90% of refugees arriving in Italy through Libya are African. Eritrean refugees constituted one quarter of refugees in Italy, while Nigerians accounted for 12% and those from Sub-Saharan Africa made up 11%. The rest come from Arab countries, mostly Syria and Sudan, accounting for a combined total of about 12,500 refugees.

### 3. Spain

- Refugees arriving in Spain usually come through the western Mediterranean.

- During the first eight months of 2015, the number of refugees arriving at the coast of Spain reached 8,000. They were mostly Syrian, Algerian and Guinean.
- Syrian refugees constituted 57% of the total number of refugees during this period, while Guineans and Algerians accounted for 20%.

## The Syrian refugee crisis in neighboring countries

- The number of Syrian refugees registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) totals 4,088,078. This number was registered between the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011 and August 29, 2015. These refugees are distributed as follows:

Country	Number
Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq	<b>2.1 million</b>
Turkey	<b>1.9 million</b>
Northern Africa	<b>24,000</b>

- About 200,000 individuals are expected to become refugees during the next four months of 2015. The number of Syrian refugees is expected to surge to 4,27 million by the end of 2015.



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