



# **Erasmus+ KA229**

## **Refugees & Migrants: The Past, The Present and The Future**

### **The present situation of Migration in Greece**

**3rd Mobility**

**Porvoo, Finland 2022**





# REFUGEE CRISIS

People fleeing violence in the Middle East and South and Central Asia viewed Greece as an entry point to Europe.

Greece received 26,048 asylum applications only in 2015.

Almost half of the Syrian refugees crossed into Europe this year.

The characteristic of these flows was that Greece was not a country of destination but **a country of transit.**

# REFUGEE CRISIS

From 2015 onwards, policies and public debate in Europe have focused on security and **the prevention of migratory flows.**

The asylum applications of the Syrians at the end of 2017 reached 1 million.

Yannis Behrakis, 2015



# The responsibility of Europe for the refugees

One of the principal aims of the **Dublin Regulation** is to prevent an applicant from submitting applications in multiple Member States

**Result:** Refugees are stacked on Greek islands in bad conditions.

This is unfair both for refugees who want to find their families in other European countries and for Greece which tries to deal with this situation.



# The responsibility of Europe for the refugees

## Trying to stop them coming...

- The EU has committed **€276 million** (\$326 million) for the new camps on Greece's five Aegean islands.

Those camps are isolated, closed and highly militarized facilities, on which several NGOs have repeatedly raised serious concerns.

- Flows have been reduced due to pushbacks.

Things seem to be under better control but human rights are still being violated.

# REFUGEE CRISIS IN 2021

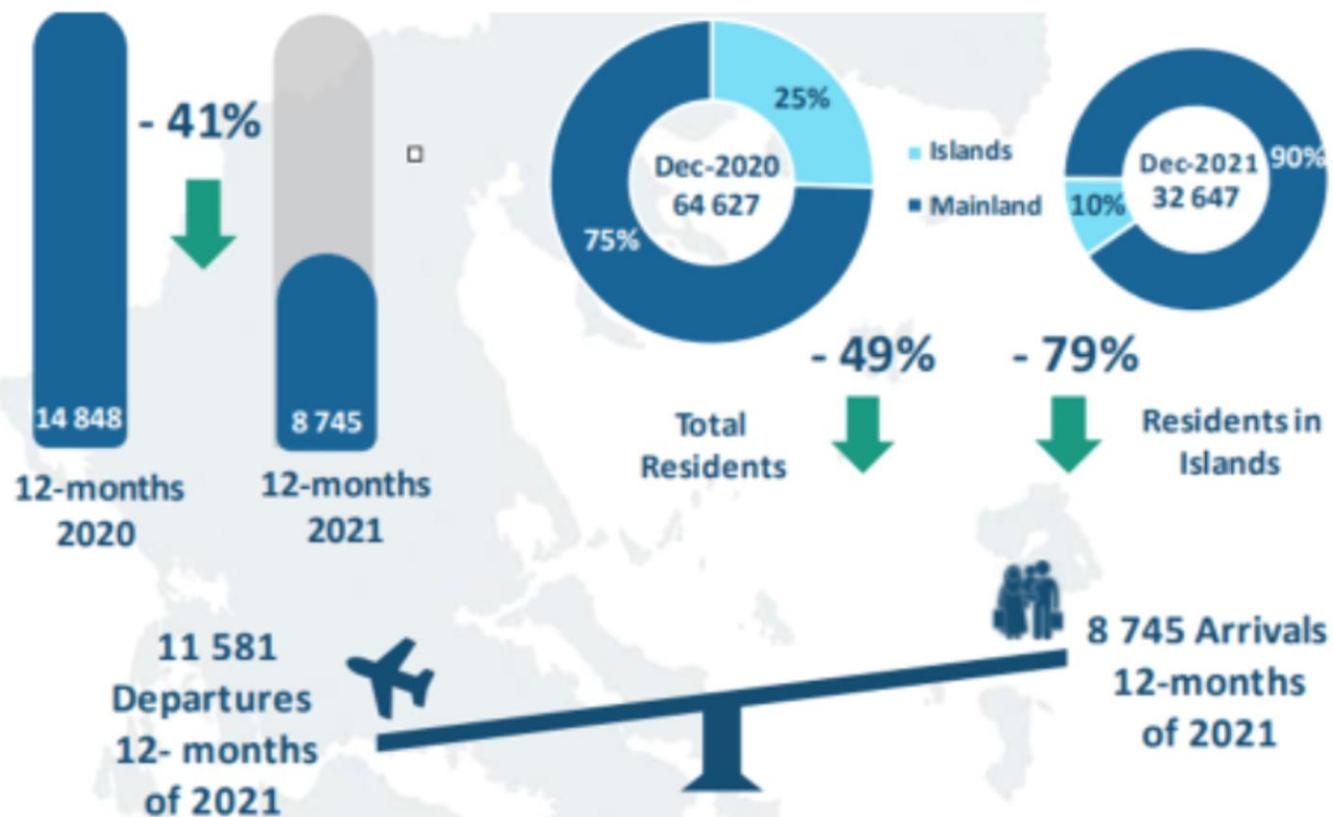
The number of refugees and migrants arriving on the Greek Aegean Islands in 2021 has reached its lowest level since the start of the so-called refugee crisis.

➤ According to the UN refugee agency UNHCR: **4,109 people** crossed from Turkey to the Greek Islands in 2021.

➤ According to the Greek Ministry of Migration: **8,745 people** is the total number of arrivals both in the islands and in the mainland in 2021.



# Statistics



# ACCORDING TO ...

“In one of the biggest mass expulsions in decades, supported by EU’s border agency Frontex, has systematically pushed back refugees, including children fleeing from wars, in their thousands, using illegal tactics ranging from assault to brutality during detention or transportation”.

The Guardian (2021-5-5)

UNHCR warns asylum under attack at Europe’s borders, urges end to pushbacks and violence against refugees

UNHCR (2021/1/28)

“The EU countries 'pushing back' asylum seekers at sea”

BBC (2021/7/13)

It's an atrocity against humankind': Greek pushback blamed for double drowning

The Guardian (2022-2-17)



# Statistics

## Analytical Overview

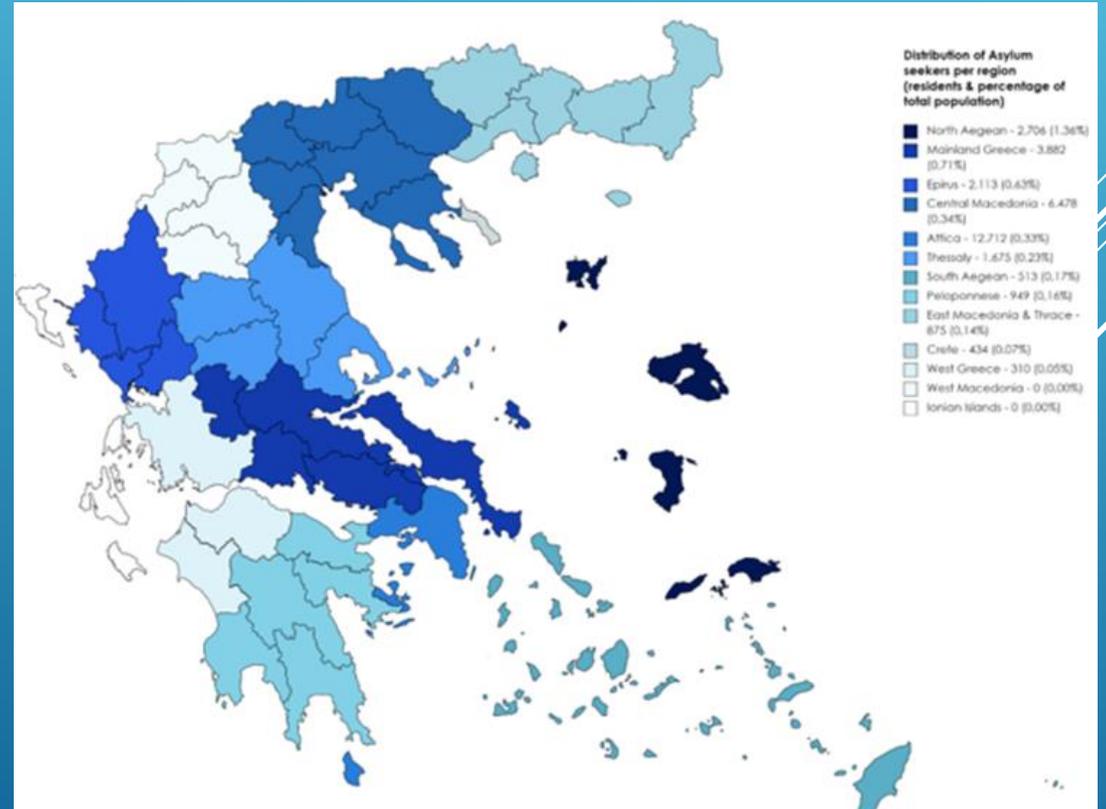
### 1. Arrivals



Arrivals were increased by 71% in December 2021 compared to the corresponding month of 2020.



Chart 1. Arrivals December 2020 - December 2021 (12 months) – See Appendix Table 1



# Unaccompanied children



# Unaccompanied children

The estimated number of **unaccompanied minors** in Greece at the end of 2021 was **2,225**.

**More than 90% are over 14 years old.**

The risks they face are:

- ▶ Physical, psychological / developmental and financial,
- ▶ Abuse and violence,
- ▶ Discrimination,
- ▶ Trafficking and exploitation.



According to data from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the National Center for Social Solidarity (EC). K.A. (Capital newspaper)

# Where are refugees accommodated?

- **Camps** (open accommodation structures)- One of the most popular camps is named Elaionas
- **Apartments** (ESTIA program)
- **Reception and Identification Centers (RIC)**



#### 4. Distribution of Asylum Seekers per Region and Accommodation scheme



Chart 4. Progress of Residents through time – See Appendix Table 6

# Access to education for refugees and asylum seekers in Greece:

- The minor children of an asylum seeker, or a recognized refugee, may access the national education system under similar conditions as Greek children.
- To enroll in Greek schools, they require the same supporting documents that are requested from the Greek pupils. Children may be enrolled even if there is not any birth or a family status certificate.



# Quality of every day life

## ▶ Xenophobia and Fear

Refugees often suffer from discrimination. This often comes in the form of narratives centered on a phobia of the outsider – based on ethnicity and race, religion, income, language and any signs of “otherness”. As a result, refugees and migrants may be perceived as a threat to the local culture, economy and security.

## ▶ Tensions over Resources

Tensions between host communities and refugees result from concern over the use of local resources. The economic crisis makes things worst.

# Quality of every day life

The difficult situation of refugees has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A nationwide lockdown implemented in March 2020 and was eased in May for the general population, but the government maintained discriminatory restrictions on thousands of migrants and asylum seekers living in camps on the islands and mainland.



# The other side...



# Job opportunities

- \* Tailors, dressmakers and sewers
- \* Sewing machine operators
- \* Personal appearance workers
- \* Gardeners and sorters of agricultural products
- \* Taxi drivers and chauffeurs
- \* Maids and housekeeping cleaners
- \* Agricultural workers
- \* Pressers, textile and related materials workers
- \* Drywall installers and ceiling installers.



# Job opportunities

- The inability to find work is a significant barrier for refugees' successful integration into society.
  - In addition, most refugees have no access to financial services - for example they cannot open a bank account, which makes it difficult to save or borrow money and start a business.
- 
- A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted upwards from left to right, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

# Inclusion

As we saw, there is a broad diversity of refugees' abilities and the potential they possess to benefit their host communities and as well as the broader Greek labour market.

Employment opportunities based on their skills can bring refugees one step closer to self-reliance and favor forging new social relationships with the host community.

The role of Vocational Education is very important. It gives them the opportunity to be educated in various job sectors.



# Inclusion story

Boye forced to flee his home in Ghana in 2016 when he was just a child, alone. Fast forward five years and he is now studying Biomedical Sciences in Deree, the American College of Greece. Thanks to a fully funded four-year scholarship provided by the College, he is now one step closer to his dream of becoming a doctor.



# Helios project

Smooth integration and coexistence between refugees and local communities are the main goals of the HELIOS project, as the country in recent years has been receiving thousands of migrants and refugees with a peak during 2015-2016.

The HELIOS project is implemented by

- the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in cooperation with
- the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and
- the funding of the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission (DG Home).

# Helios project

The main pillars of the project include:

- accommodation support
- Greek language courses
- employability support
- integration monitoring
- sensitisation of local communities
- highlighting the value of integration



**The inclusion of refugees to the Greek society are for the benefit of both sides.**

# Trying to be optimists.....

Integration efforts through education and training are essential not only for inclusion of refugees in Greek society, but also in every EU country where they could be relocated, in the future.

Effective management of migration and asylum policies in the EU also depends on the effective social inclusion of refugees and migrants through the osmosis with the European societies.



**Improving their quality of life is essential for social cohesion.**

