

MIGRANT AND REFUGEE CRISIS

IMPACT ON GREECE AND ITALY

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Chapter 1: Refugee and Migrant Crisis



Asylum seekers and migrants descend from a large fishing vessel used to transport them from Turkey to the Greek island of Lesbos. October 11, 2015

Major Crises in the last decade

▶ North Africa - Libya Migrant Crisis 2011

Thousands of people were forced to leave Libya and head to Italy and Malta, after the Arab Spring and the Libyan Civil War.

▶ Syrian Refugee Crisis 2011-2012

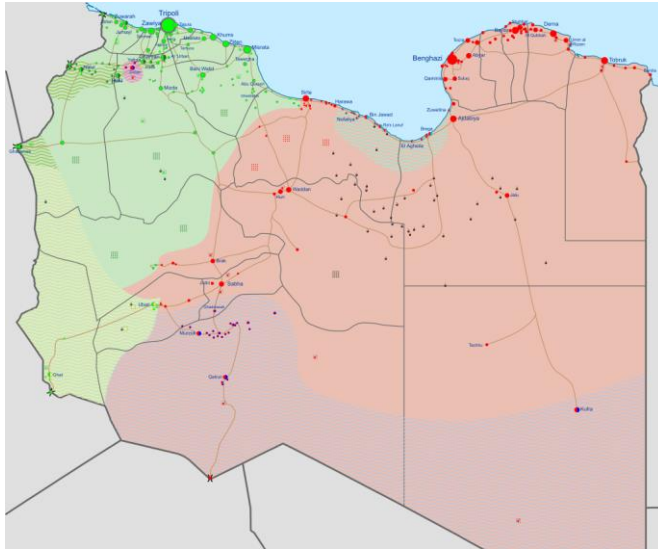
The Syrian Civil war was the reason for thousands of Syrian refugees to come to Europe seeking Asylum.

▶ Mediterranean Sea Crisis 2014-2015

Conflicts in the Middle East led to massive migration to Europe, mainly through Greece and Italy.

▶ European Migrant and Refugee Crisis 2015-2016

This was the largest Refugee Crisis in Europe in the 21st Century. More than 1 million refugees and migrants arrived in Europe through the Balkans and the Mediterranean sea. Due to this crisis, changes were made in the EU asylum agreements with third countries, like the EU-Turkey deal.

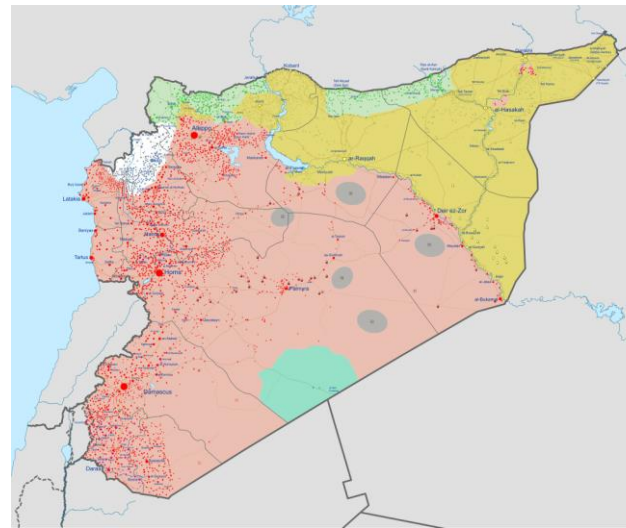


Libyan crisis (2011–present) Cause of the Refugee Wave

The Libyan crises started in 2011 with the Arab spring protests. Followed by 2 civil wars and the death of Muammar Gaddafi. The wars brought large instability in the area, which led Libyan people to migrate to Europe.

Syrian Civil War 2011 Cause of the Refugee Wave

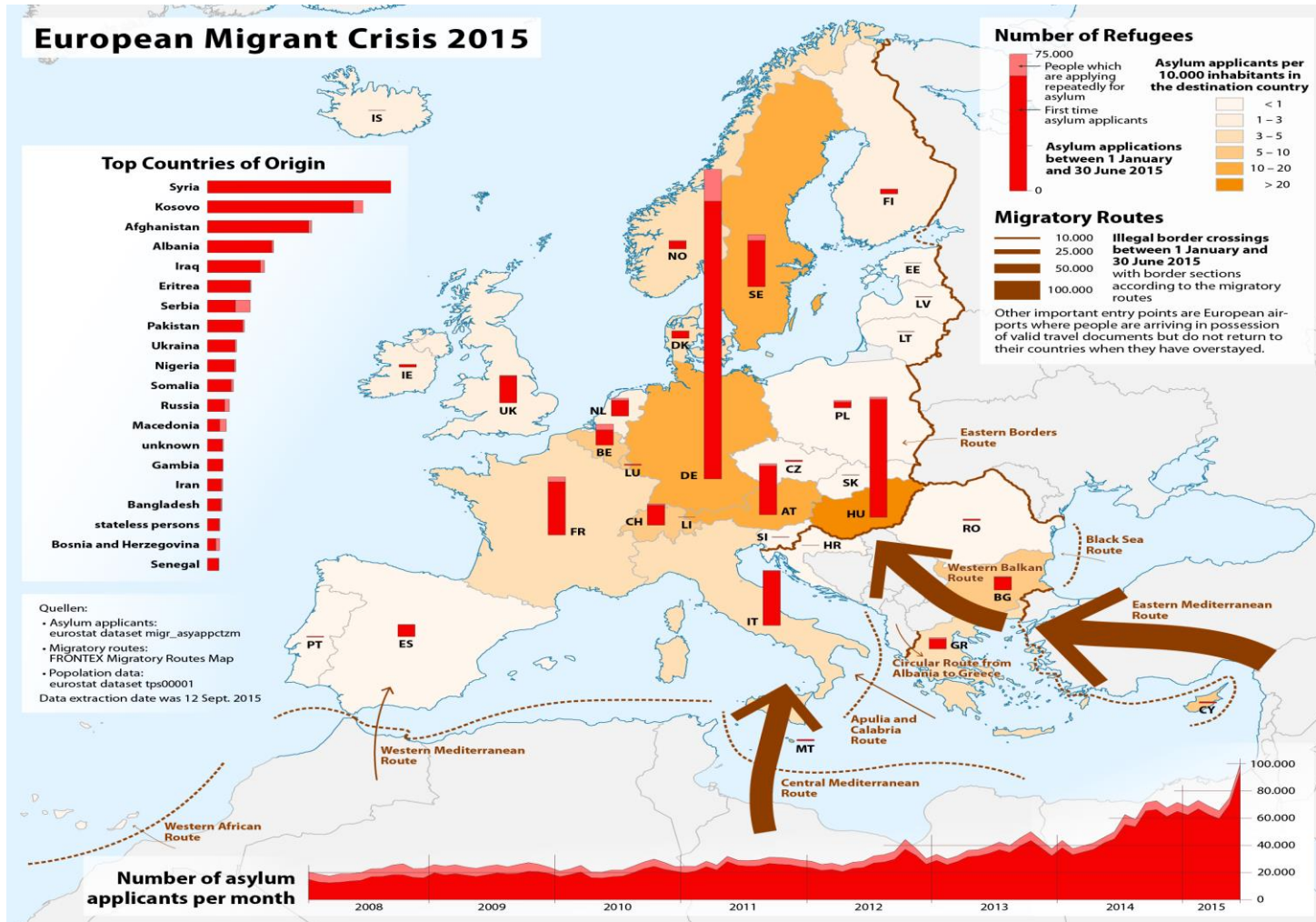
The Syrian Civil War began in March 2011 numerous protests, against the government and were pro-democratic. Rebel Forces helped by NATO were involved



EUROPEAN MIGRANT CRISIS 2015

Migratory Routes

- a) Greece
- b) Italy

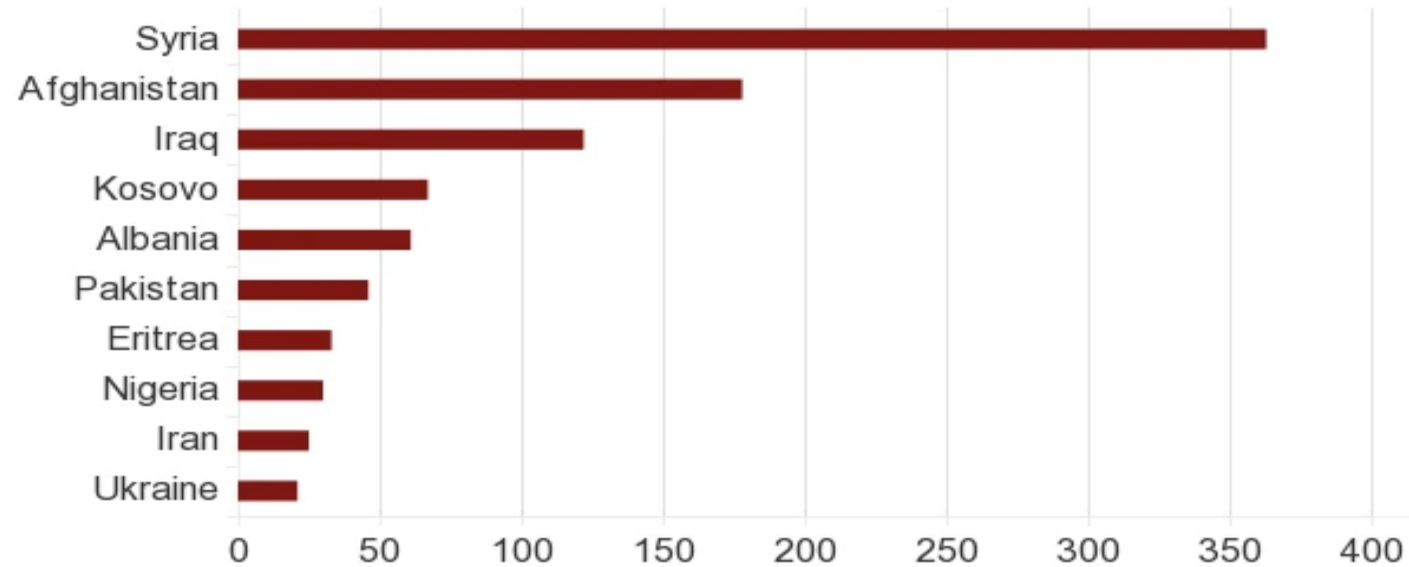


This Crisis was caused by:

1. The rise of ISIS in Syria, as well as the ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Syria.
2. Problems with the EU's Asylum system

Top 10 origins of people applying for asylum in the EU

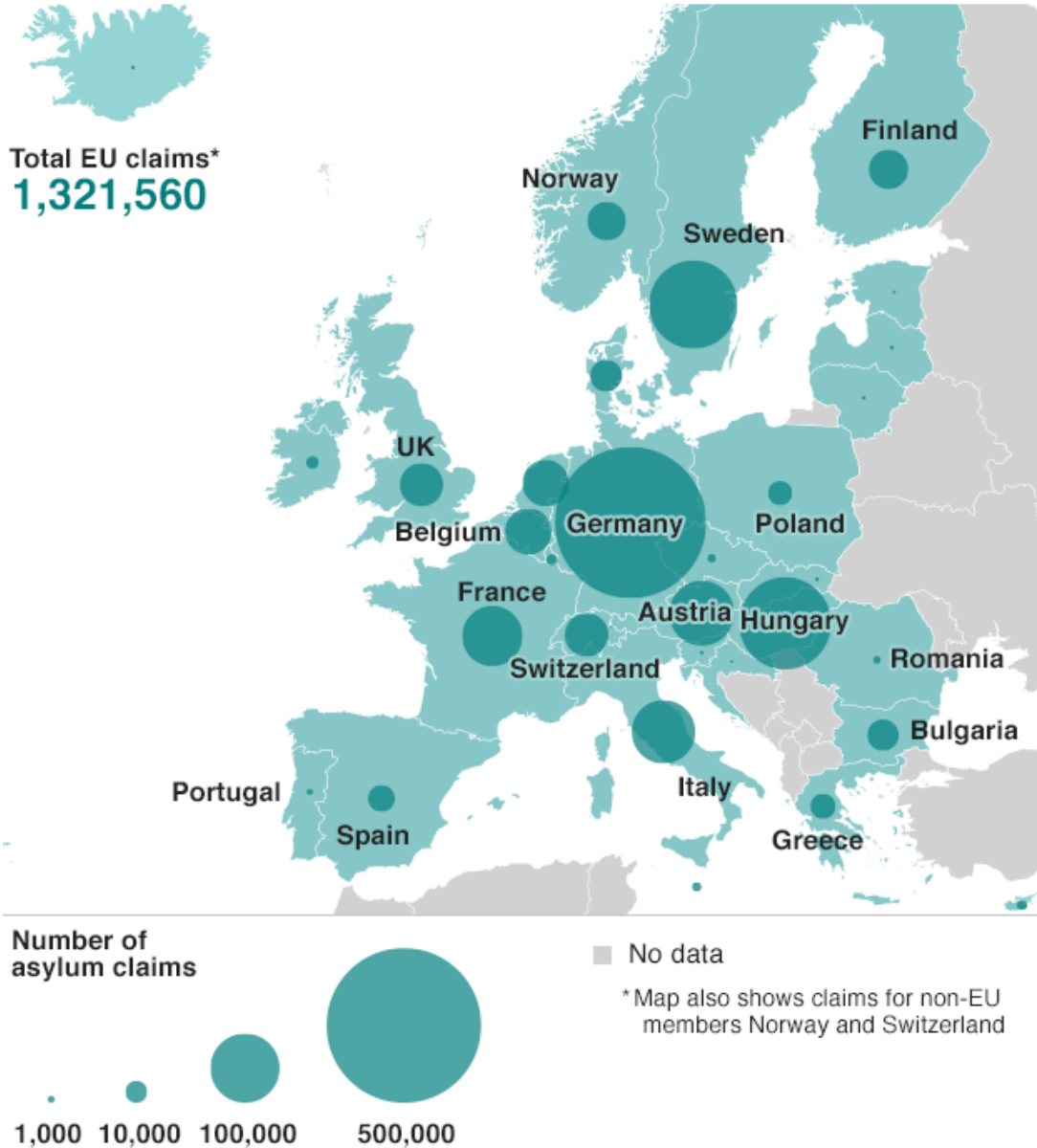
First-time applications in 2015, in thousands



Source: Eurostat

- During the Migration Crisis in 2015, more than one million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe.
- The main Country of origin is Syria, due to the ongoing Syrian war. Also, the instability in Afghanistan and Iraq led to large migration in Europe.

Asylum claims in Europe, 2015

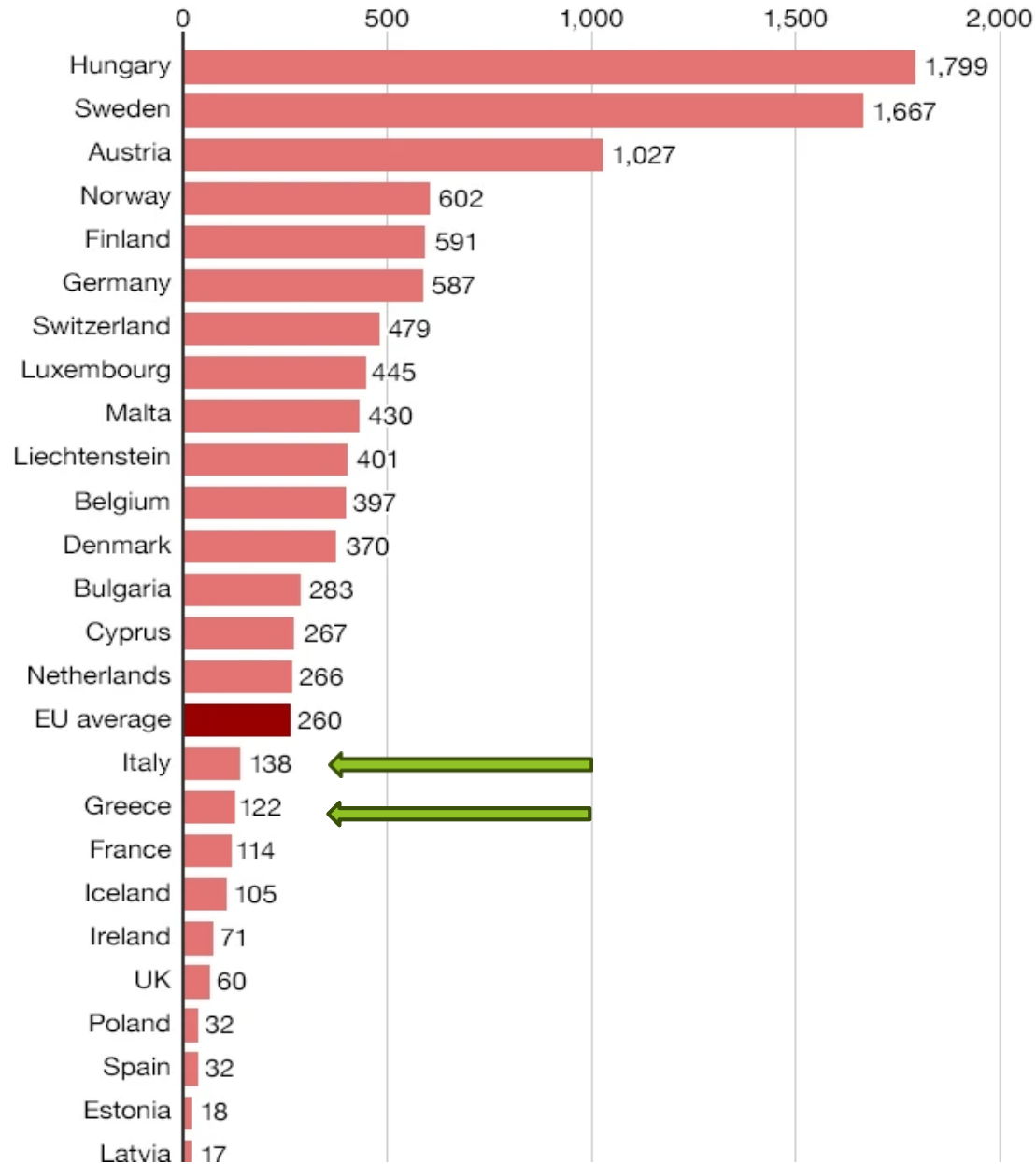


Source: Eurostat

BBC

- ▶ More than 1.3 Million asylums were claimed in Europe in 2015. Germany received the highest number of asylum applications, around 500.000.
- ▶ Hungary is the second most popular destination for asylum applications. Migrants take the route through Greece and the West Balkans to get to Hungary.

Asylum applications per 100,000 local population, 2015



- ▶ Even though Germany was first in asylum applications, Hungary had the most applications compared to its population.
- ▶ The EU had 260 applications for every 100.000 residents.

Chapter 2: EU Policy towards Refugee and Migrant Crisis



EU Agreements

► The Dublin Regulation/Convention

This agreement was signed in 1990 and is about the criteria and rules deciding which Member State is responsible for handling each asylum application, given from a third country national. The agreement had two renewals, Dublin 2 in 2003 and Dublin 3 in 2013.

► Impact on Greece and Italy

The Dublin regulation does not work in favour of countries that are entry points for asylum seekers, like Greece and Italy, because it gives them the responsibility for the application procedure. Due to the large number of arrivals in both countries, there is a high volume of asylum applications that must be processed.

► EU Quota System



The idea of the EU Quota system was to allocate the asylum seekers among all member states and balance the inflows of refugees, after the migration crisis of 2015.

However, this system was never fully applied. Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland objected. This was bad news for Greece and Italy, the front-line countries that were overwhelmed with migrants.


The EU-Turkey refugee deal

... was signed in 2016. The agreement includes the following points:

EU

-  to return all migrants illegally arriving to the Greek islands via Turkey
-  to provide financial aid for refugees in Turkey
-  to regularly accept Syrian refugees from Turkey

Turkey

-  to combat illegal migration

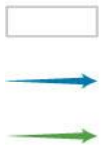
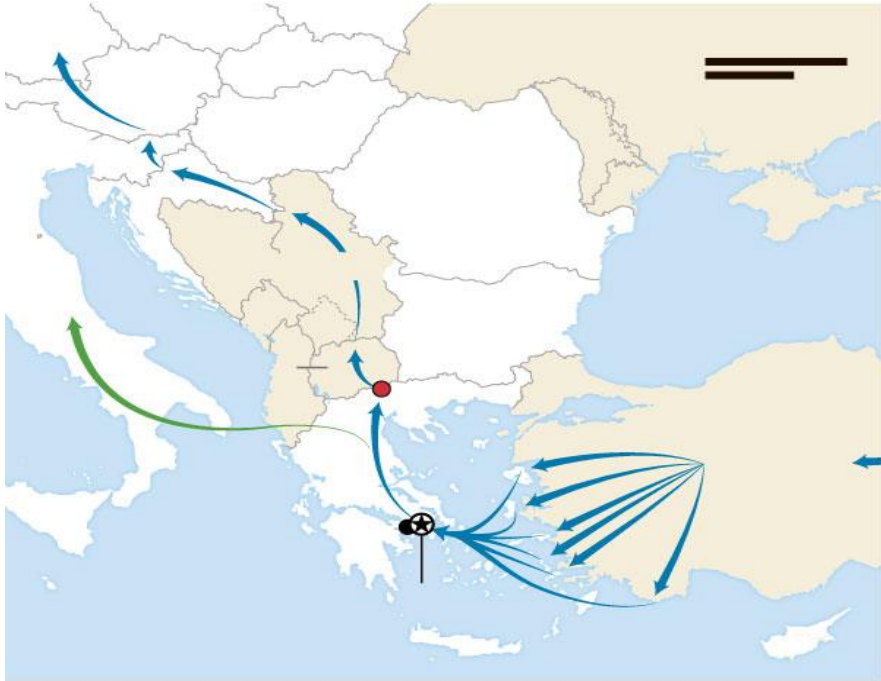
EU / Turkey

- to reopen talks over Turkey's accession to the EU
- to discuss liberalization of visa requirements for Turkish citizens



Chapter 3: The Impact of the Crisis on Greece

- ▶ The geographical location of Greece, makes it a transit country for migrants and refugees who want to travel to other EU countries. In many cases third country nationals stay in Greece, as their destination country.
- ▶ In 2015, during the European migration crisis, around 850.000 arrivals were reported in Greece. Due to the high number of arrivals, the UNHCR declared a level 2 emergency for Greece.
- ▶ In 2016, the EU-Turkey deal was applied and there was a decrease of arrivals at around 155.000.
- ▶ Migration has negatively affected Greece and its economy. The government needed to provide shelter, healthcare and security for the arrivals.
- ▶ The EU assisted the Greek government through funding programs.(EU emergency support instrument, European Asylum Support Office).



Eastern Mediterranean Route - Greece

This Route is used by migrants and refugees from the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

The Impact of the Crisis on Greece

- ▶ The migration crises encouraged anti-immigration sentiment and nationalism as well as a feeling of abandonment of Greece by the EU.
- ▶ In 2015, some political parties and social groups in Greece expressed opposition to migration.
- ▶ “Golden Dawn”, a far-right party in Greece was the most intense about migration, believing that it was a threat to the country’s security and values.
- ▶ Local groups like “Samos SOS” and the “Coordinating Committee of Lesbos Citizens” protested the arrival of migrants in overcrowded areas on Samos and Lesbos islands.



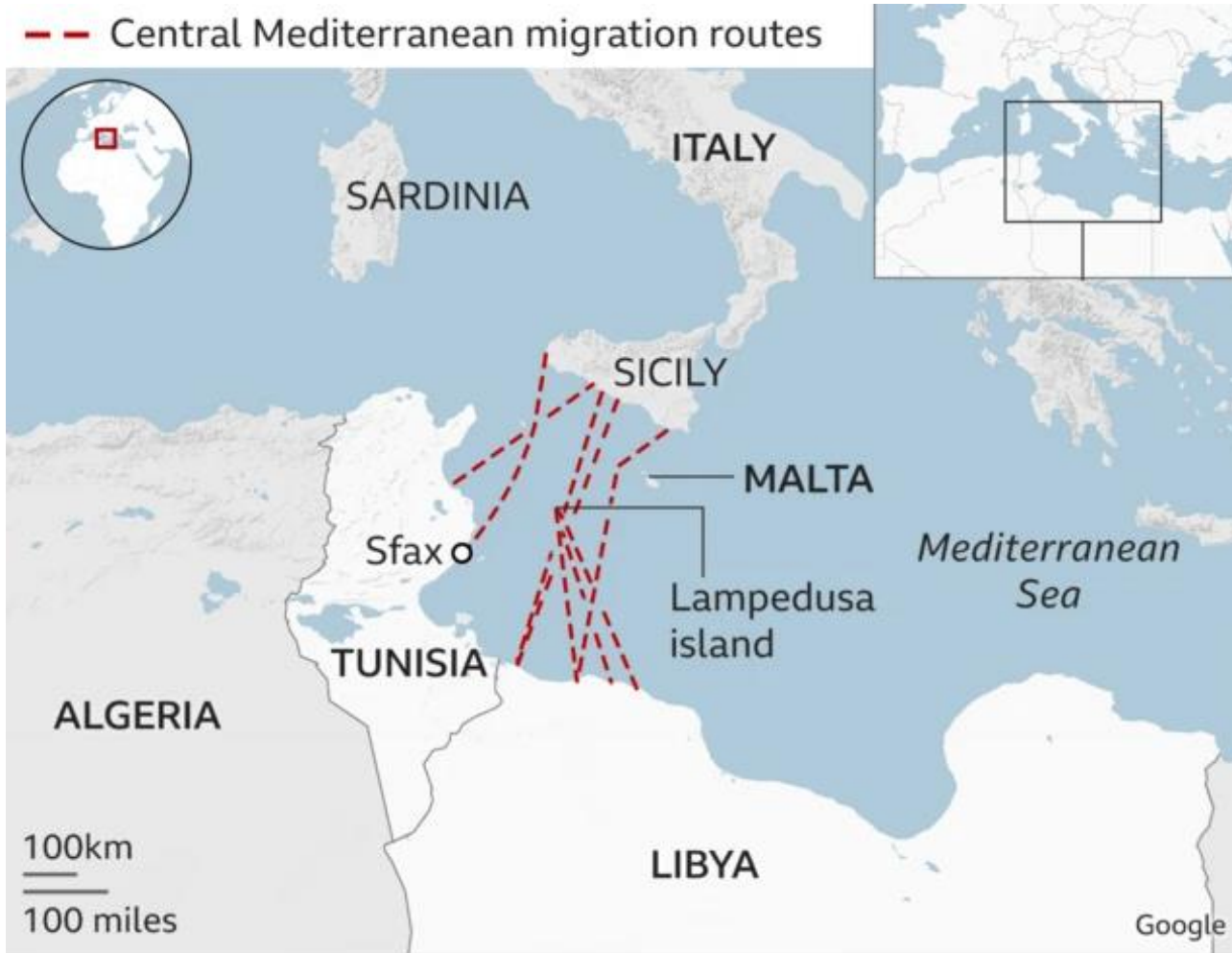
Chapter 4: The Impact of the Crisis on Italy

- ▶ Italy is a very popular transit and host country for migrants and refugees. Most of them come from North Africa and the middle east.
- ▶ Italy had received over 180.000 migrants in 2016, and 105.00 in 2022.
- ▶ Ports in south Italy were affected the most by migration, especially Sicily.
- ▶ After the 2015 migration crisis, anti-immigrant and far right movements have risen in Italy. Xenophobia phenomenon was shown during the crisis. Groups of people accused migrants of crime and poverty in Italy.
- ▶ The High level of migration led to the rise of nationalist political parties like the Lega Nord (from 2017 Lega), a right-wing political party led by Matteo Salvini that is concerned about migration among other issues.



► Lega Nord

-- Central Mediterranean migration routes



Source: IOM

BBC

Conclusion



- ▶ Wars, conflicts and world Instability led to the Migration and Refugee Crisis. A phenomenon that affected the EU in many ways.
- ▶ Greece and Italy have served as entry points for migrants and refugees, due to their geographic location. During the migration crises in the last decades, both countries suffered and were in difficult situations. This highlighted the need for a more equitable and efficient policy from the EU.

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