

MIGRATION AND SECURITY IN GREECE

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HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN GREECE

Many places in Greece are often characterized as “Land of Refugees”

Greece has a long history of migration and “exchange of populations”, since 1912. Greeks from Pontus (Black Sea region), Minor Asia and East Thrace were slaughtered (GENOCIDE of GREEKS). As a result, the Greek Prime Minister agreed on “exchange of populations” between Greece and Turkey in the “Treaty of Lausanne” in 1923.



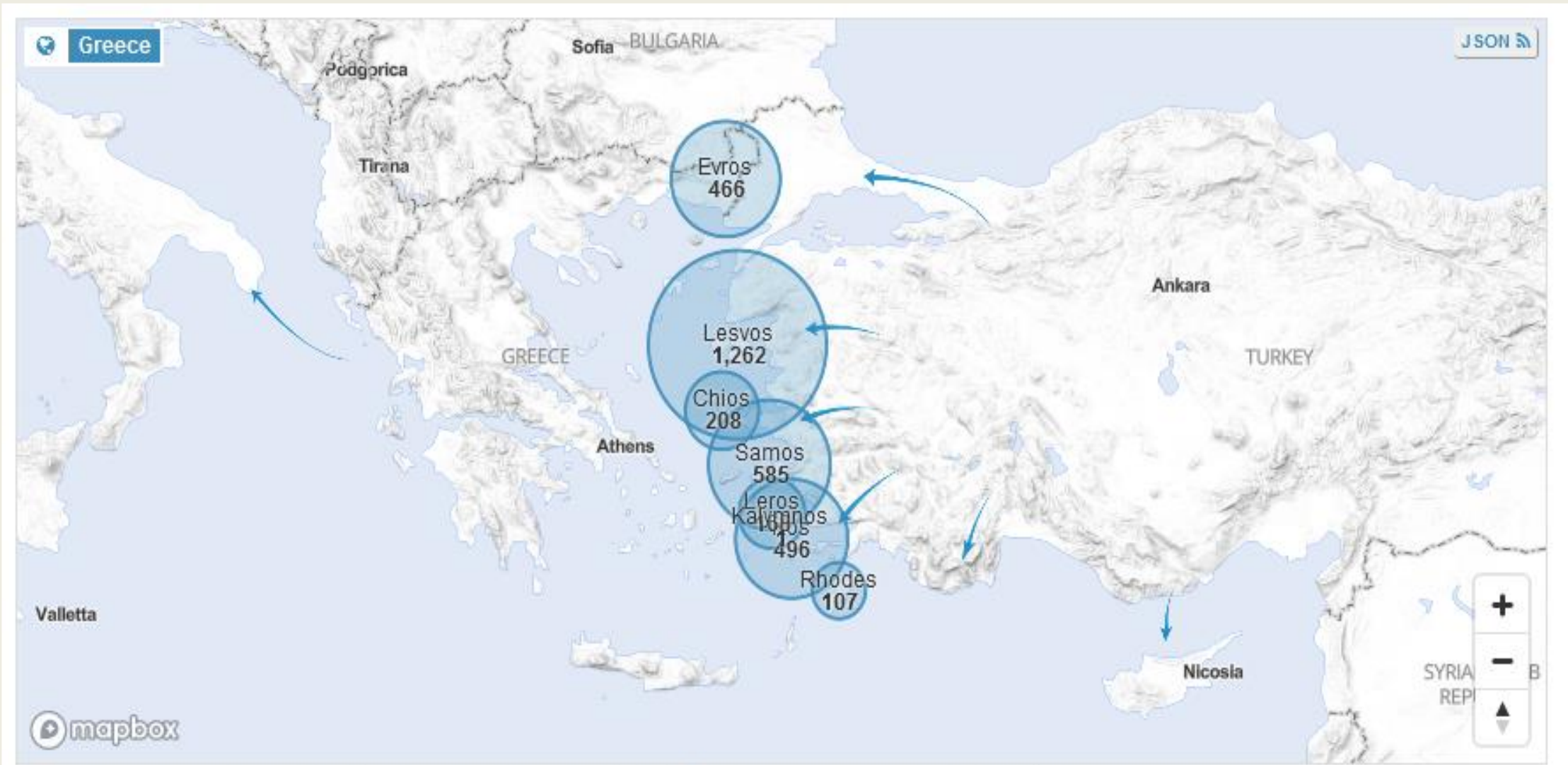
According to immigration statistics of EU, Greece has accepted over 1 million immigrants in the period 1960-2005 (around 9% of total resident population).

RECENT MIGRATION IN GREECE

- According to [UNHCR](#), Greece has accepted the following migrants/refugees since 2014.

Previous years	Sea arrivals	Land arrivals	Dead and missing	Total arrivals in 2023
2022	12,758	6,022	326	3,293 Last updated 26 Mar 2023
2021	4,331	4,826	115	
2020	9,714	5,982	102	Sea arrivals in 2023
2019	59,726	14,887	71	2,827 Last updated 26 Mar 2023
2018	32,494	18,014	174	
2017	29,718	6,592	59	
2016	173,450	3,784	441	Land arrivals in 2023
2015	856,723	4,907	799	466 Last updated 26 Mar 2023
2014	41,038	2,280	405	

RECENT MIGRATION IN GREECE



RECENT MIGRATION IN GREECE

Since Greece is accessible through land and sea, it is common that refugees/migrants are arriving by traffickers mostly by boats. Rescues are applied almost every day since 2014 by the Greek Coast Guard, volunteers and Greek citizens.

Islands in the eastern part of the Aegean Sea, are the places where most of the migrants arrive daily (Lesbos, Chios, Kos, Samos, etc).

Citizens in those islands have been offering volunteer work in assisting refugees since 2014 and a lot of them had offered their homes as shelters.



RECENT MIGRATION IN GREECE

Back in 2016, when the migration crisis was relatively “new” in Europe, refugees who were reaching Greece were hoping to move further in Europe. Greece was the first EU country that they reached, therefore – according to EU legislation – they had to seek Asylum in this country.

Common European Asylum System:

- ✓ The European Union is an area of protection for people fleeing persecution or serious harm in their country of origin.
- ✓ Asylum is a fundamental right and an international obligation for countries, as recognised in the 1951 Geneva Convention on the protection of refugees.
- ✓ In the EU, an area of open borders and freedom of movement, member countries share the same fundamental values and joint approach to guarantee high standards of protection for refugees.

RECENT MIGRATION IN EUROPE

Common European Asylum System (cont.):

- ✓ EU countries have a shared responsibility to welcome asylum seekers in a dignified manner, ensuring that they are treated fairly and their case is examined following uniform standards. This ensures that, no matter where an applicant applies, the outcome will be similar. Procedures must be fair, effective throughout the EU, and impervious to abuse.
- ✓ However, asylum flows are not constant, nor are they evenly distributed across the EU. They have, for example, varied from over 1.8 million in 2015 to around 142,000 in 2019, a decrease of 92%.

RECENT MIGRATION IN EUROPE

Common European Asylum System (cont.):

- ✓ With this in mind, since 1999, the EU has established a Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In **2020**, the European Commission proposed to reform the system through a comprehensive approach to migration and asylum policy based on three main pillars:
 - ✓ efficient asylum and return procedures,
 - ✓ solidarity and fair share of responsibility and
 - ✓ strengthened partnerships with third countries.

RECENT MIGRATION IN GREECE



- February 2016: European countries (Austria, Denmark, Belgium, North Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland and Serbia) decide to close their borders.
- Thousands of refugees are stuck in Greece, waiting for months to cross (legally) the borders.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH9jf5uitfo>
- Greece does not have the capacity nor the facilities to deal with the waves of incoming refugees.
- Most of the refugees are temporarily staying in hotspots, hoping to receive approval for travelling to Europe.
- Meanwhile EU is communicating that the migration crisis is dealt in success and in cooperation of member-states!!!
- EU Council President Donald Tusk announces that closing the Balkan Route (closing of borders of Western Balkan countries) is decided among 28 member states. EU is funding Turkey to accept refugees and deal with the migration crisis.
- By 2020, EU legislation has altered the system for Asylum and most European countries have closed their borders to migrants/refugees. However, until today, refugees are arriving to Greece (mainly by sea).

SECURITY AND MIGRATION IN GREECE

- Rescuing refugees by Hellenic Coast Guard is a daily routine:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUjOTr8bSko>

- Shipwrecks are unfortunately happening very often in the Mediterranean sea, including the Greek territorial waters. Rescuing refugees in the island of Kithira:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIRFS5pezq8>

- According to a Greek rescuer who talked to the European Parliament in May 2022, the Greek Coast Guard is not supporting migrants. After his statement, his nomination by the Greek Government was cancelled:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnTkiBGWzIQ>