



An Emergency Management Perspective of the European Migrant Crisis

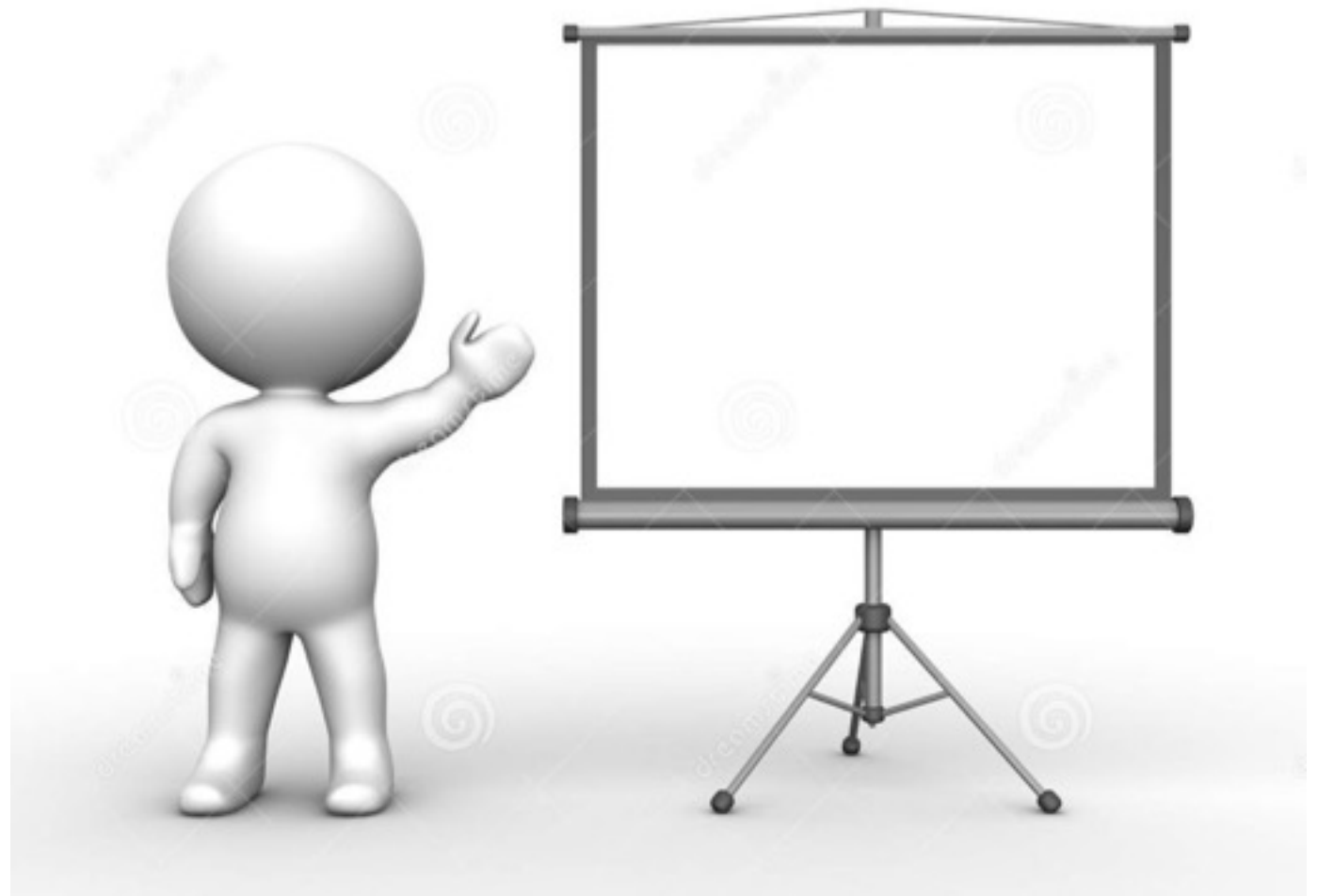
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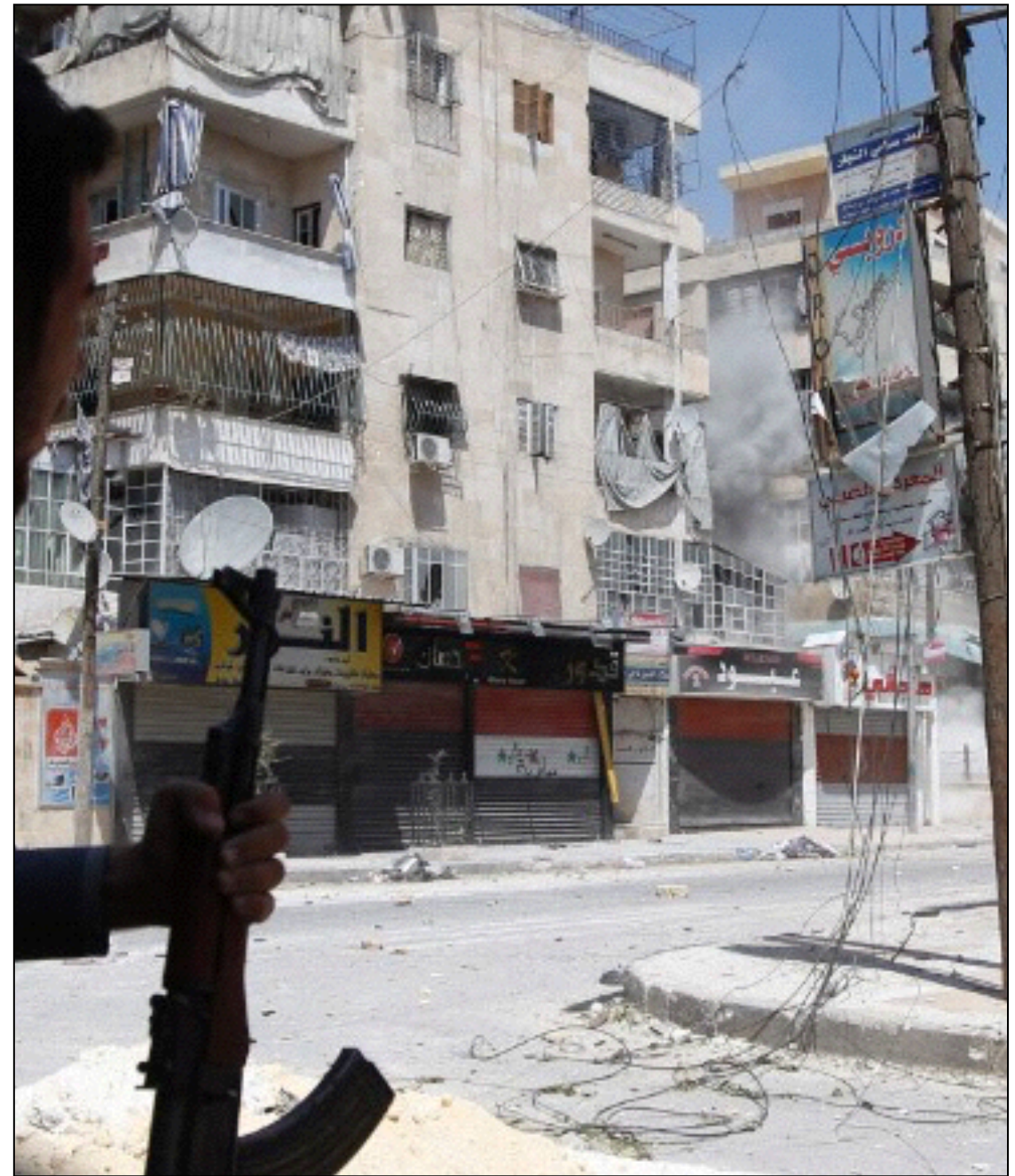
Highlights

- The road to crisis
- A complex emergency
- A failure of initiative, EU-style
- Greece in focus: making the same mistake twice
- Smugglers' Blues
- Summary



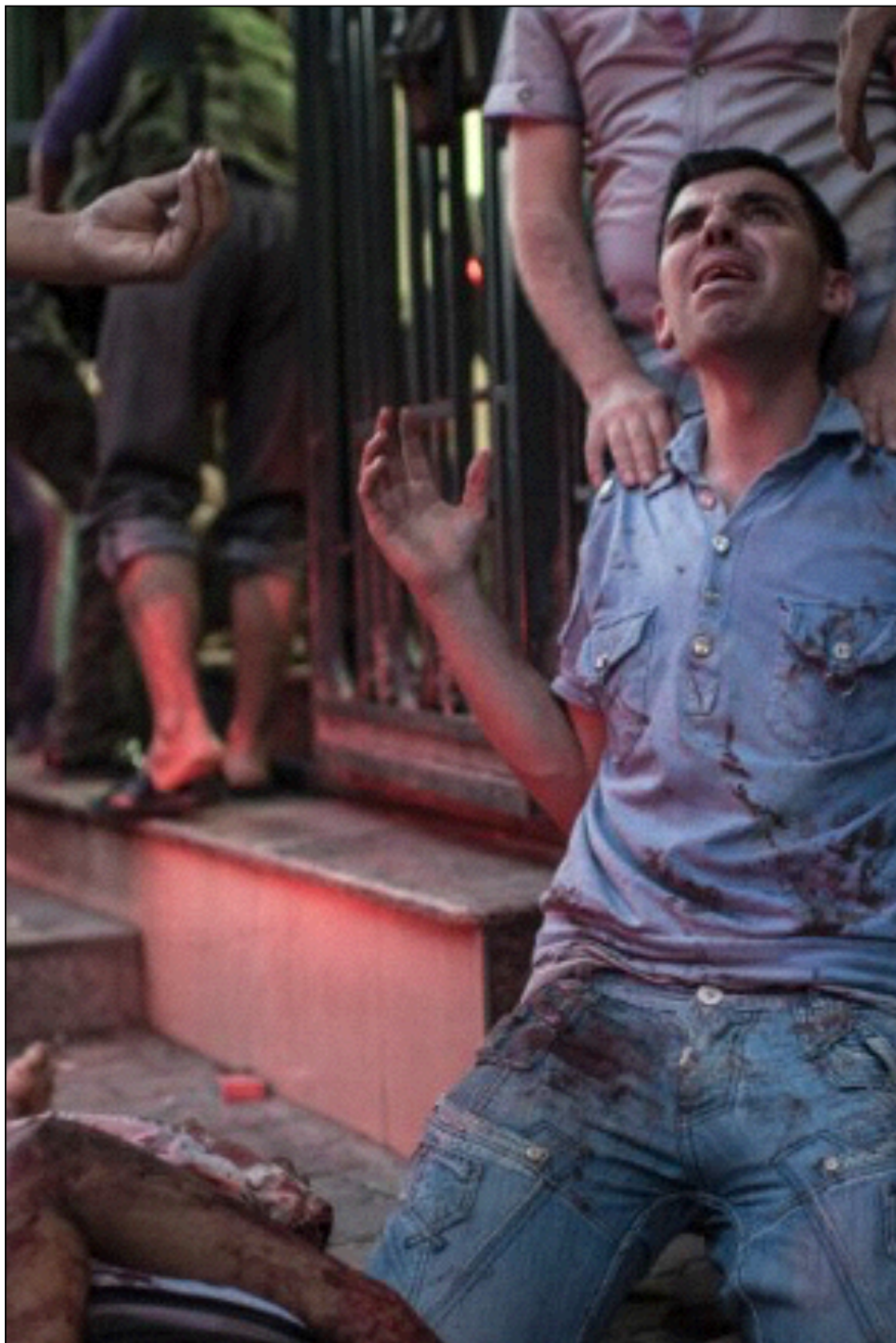
The road to crisis

- Recent turmoil and insecurity in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
 - Major insurgencies in Syria, Libya and Yemen fueled by the “Arab Spring”.
 - Instability in post-war Iraq and Afghanistan.



Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/08/28/politics/syrian-refugees-resettling-us-obama-administration/>





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The road to crisis

- The protracted violence and instability have spawned a massive migratory wave
 - More than 4 million people have fled Syria since 2011
 - Approximately 4.5 million have been displaced by the protracted conflict in Iraq, while 270,000 more have left the country.
 - Around 250,000 Afghan refugees remain out of their home country.



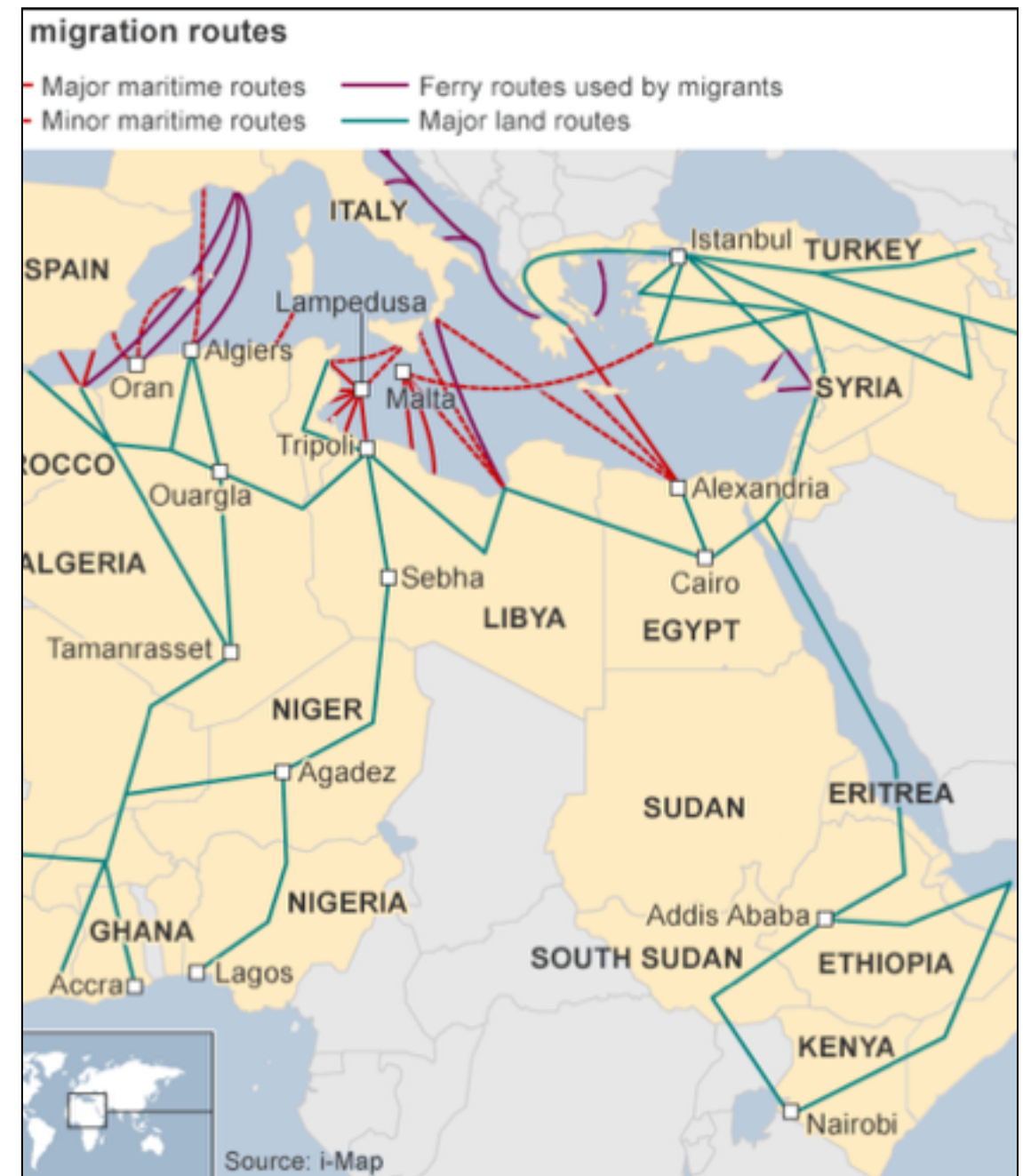
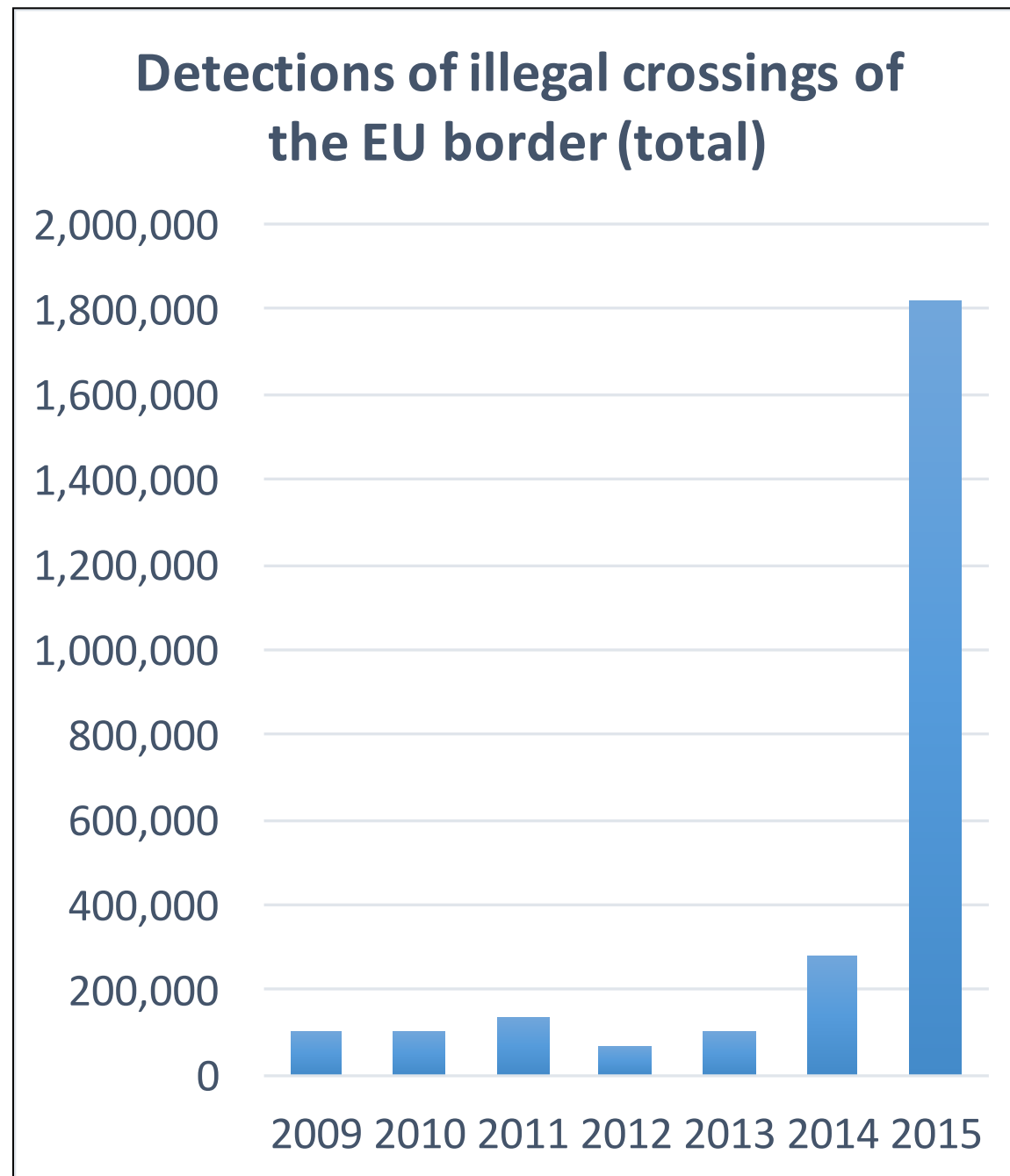
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A complex emergency



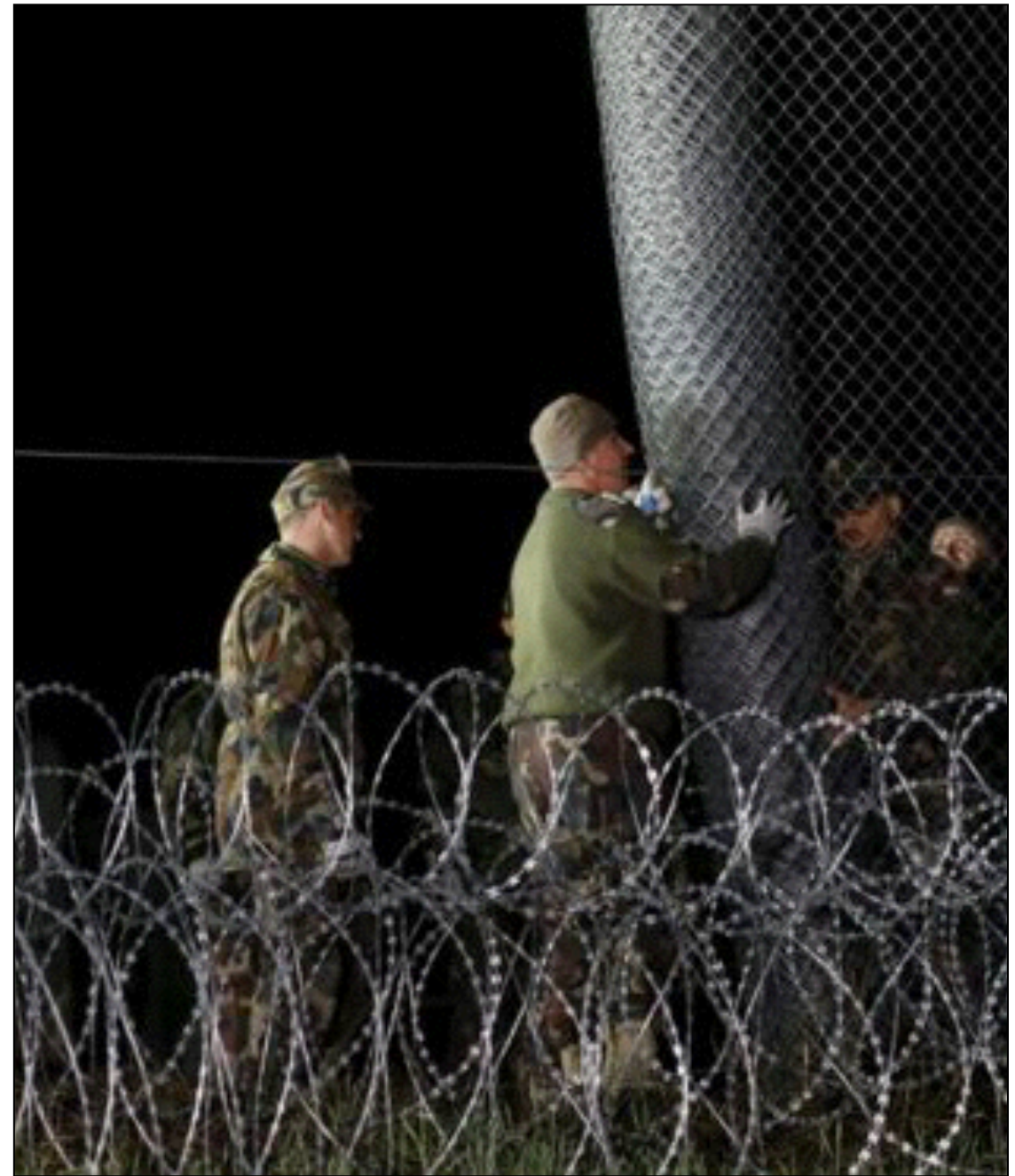
Detections of illegal crossings of the EU border

Route	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Central Mediterranean (Italy, Malta)	11,043	4,450	64,261	15,151	45,298	170,664	153,946
Eastern Mediterranean (Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus)	39,975	55,688	57,025	37,224	24,799	50,834	885,386
Western Balkans	3,089	2,371	4,658	6,391	19,951	43,357	764,038
Albania to Greece	40,250	35,297	5,269	5,502	8,728	8,841	8,932
Western Mediterranean	6,642	5,003	8,448	6,397	6,838	7,272	7,164
Eastern borders	1,335	1,052	1,049	1,597	1,316	1,275	1,920
Black Sea	1	0	0	1	148	433	68
Western Africa	2,244	196	340	174	283	276	874
Other	20	3	1	0	4	10	9
Total	104,599	104,060	141,051	72,437	107,365	282,962	1,822,337



Political issues

- Geopolitical issues
 - Border control
 - Open internal border and free movement
- Many European Union countries closed their borders.
 - The Schengen Agreement had abolished border restrictions in 1995.
- Some countries have built or are planning to build fences and walls at parts of their border.



A failure of initiative, EU-style



- Exodus casts spotlight on Europe's lack of readiness
- Syrian exodus highlights failure of West



Maritime security



- Operation “Mare Nostrum” initially covered most of Central Mediterranean.
- EU-funded Operations Triton and Sophia.
 - Search & Rescue, and attempt to stem the migrant influx.
- NATO maritime force deployment.
 - Request of Turkey, Greece and Germany.
 - Reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance only.



Law and legal issues

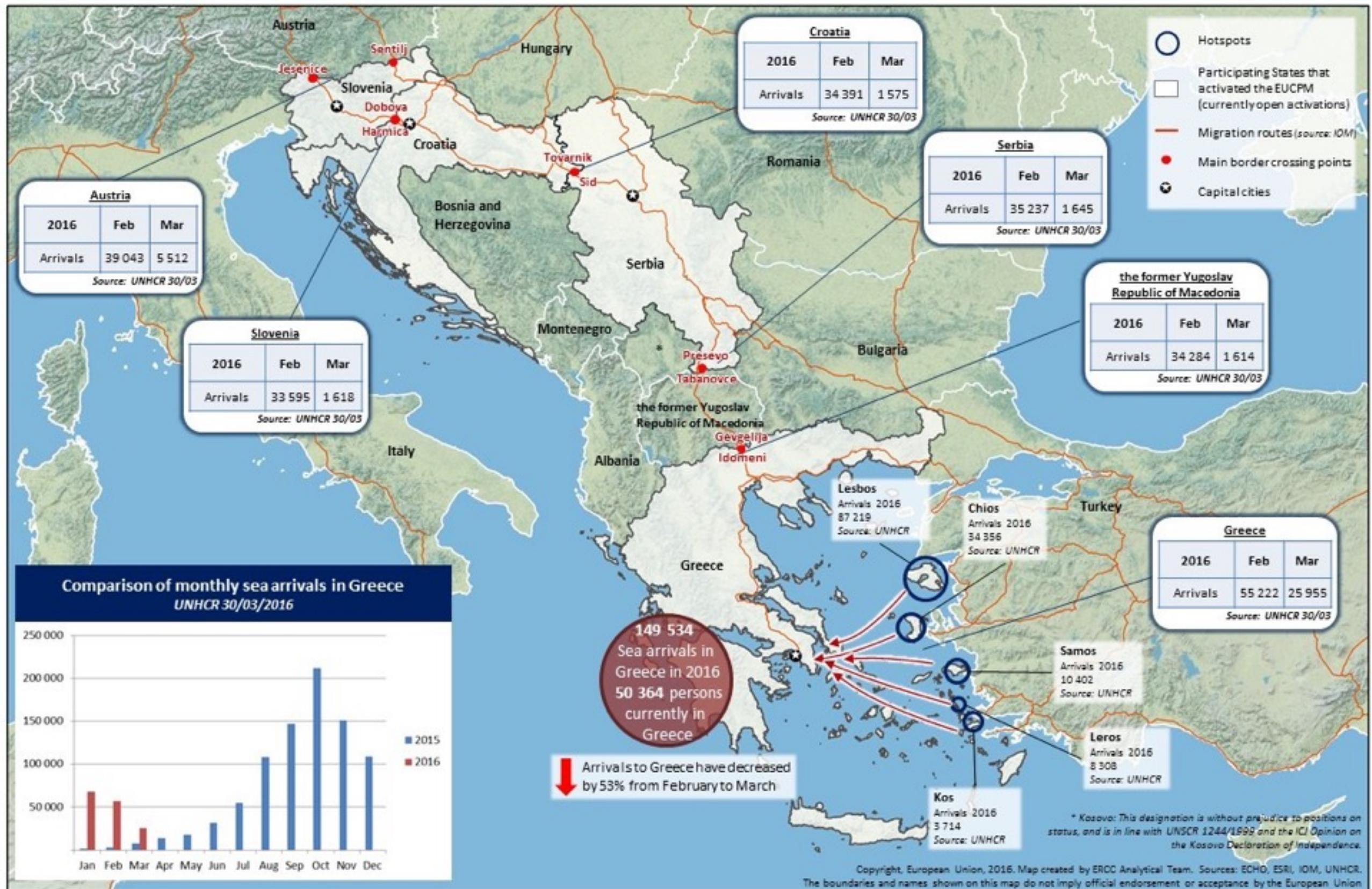
- International law
 - Migrants are in a country not affected by the emergency.
- Internally Displaced Person law
 - Migrants are outside their home country.
- Refugee law
 - Only a minority of the migrants request asylum.
 - Dublin Regulation partially suspended by Hungary.



Greece in focus

- Greece has been affected by the migrant crisis more than any other European country.
- 856,000 people traveled from the Turkish coast to several Greek islands in 2015.
 - The trend continues in 2016.
- Over 6,000 islands (227 inhabited)
 - Huge landmass-to-shoreline ratio makes border control nearly impossible.





Example: Lesvos Island

- Located at the SE edge of the Aegean Sea
- Population 88,000
- Separated from Turkey with a 9-mile wide channel
- 90,000 migrants arrived from January to July 2016.



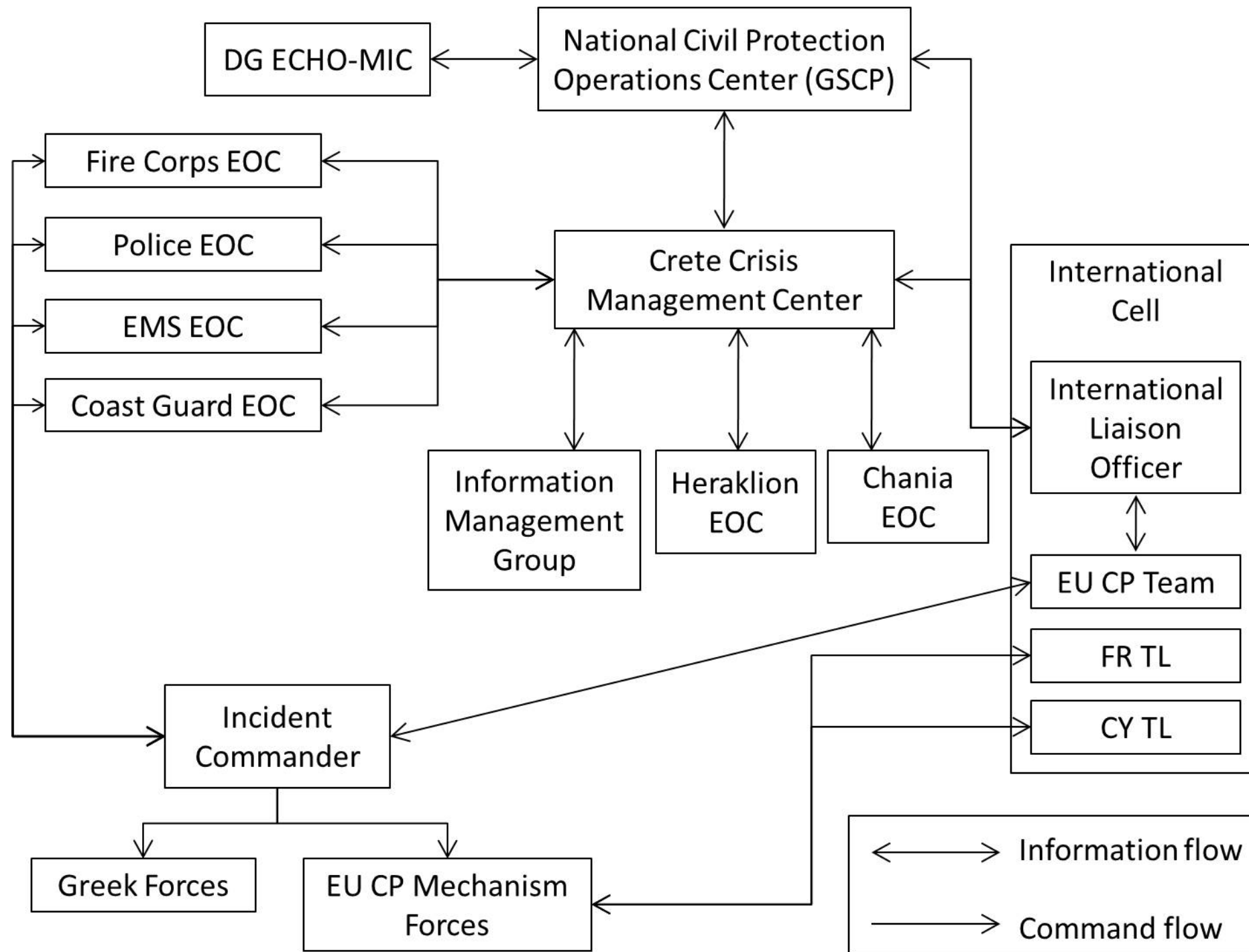


Emergency management in Greece

- Hazard-oriented emergency management
 - Focus on earthquakes and wildfires, Greece's top hazards
- "Xenokrates" is the code name for Greece's National Emergency Operation Plan.
- Each level of government required to develop and maintain a different plan for each hazard.
- Piecemeal emergency preparedness
- Emergency services
 - Hierarchical, top-down, military-like structure
 - Centralized decision-making and resource management
- Civil protection (emergency management in Europe)
 - Local and regional civil protection agencies are autonomous, and report directly to the Chief Elected Official
- Soft civil protection legislation



Multi-agency coordination structure



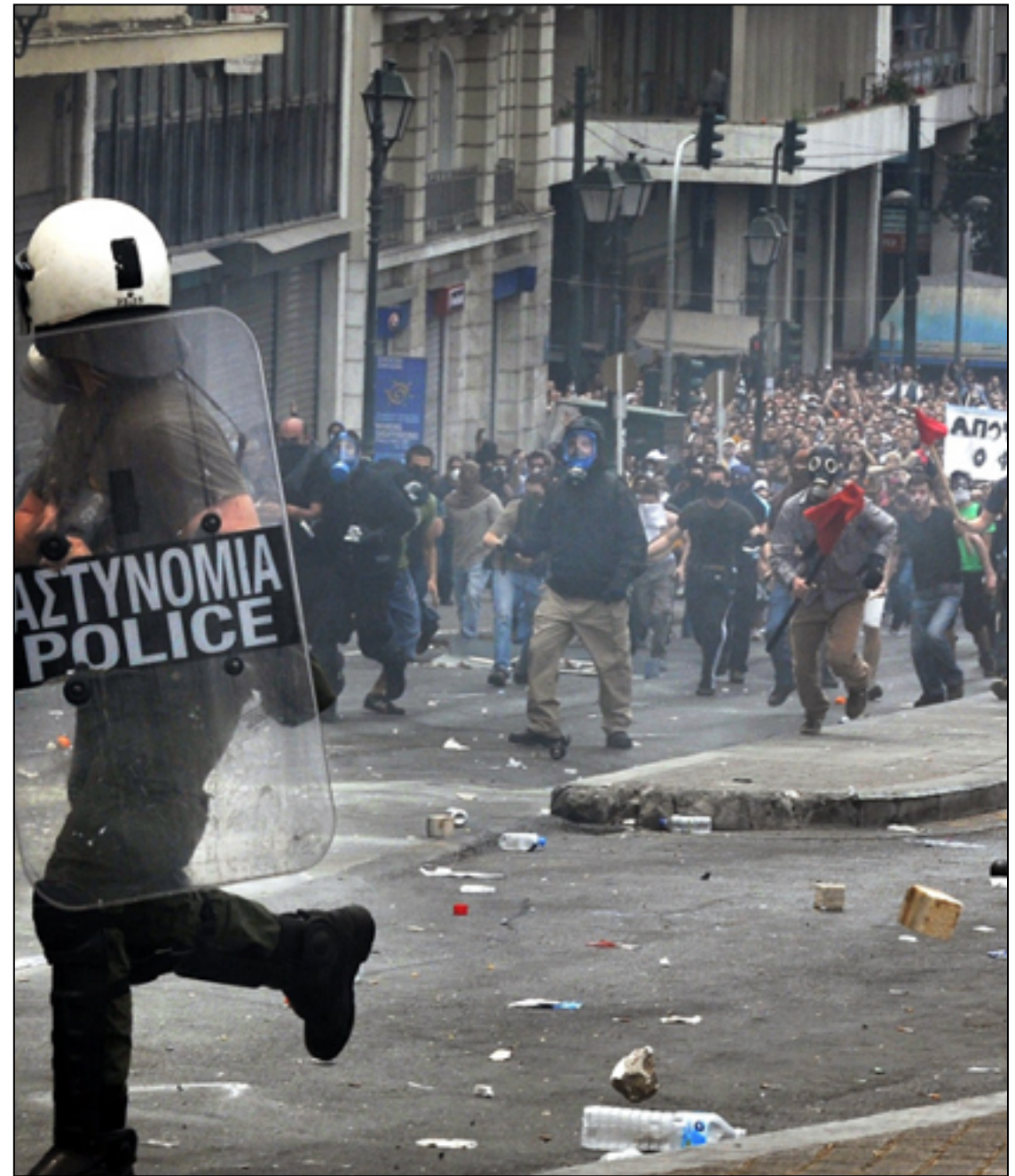
Migration agencies

- Illegal migration was beyond the mission of civil protection agencies!
- Pre-April 2016
 - Asylum Service: Receive and process requests for international protection.
 - First Reception Service: Identify, register, and provide information, relief and medical care to migrants.
 - both had limited capabilities.
- Post-April 2016
 - Asylum Service and First Reception Service merged into a single agency, yet still with limited capabilities.



Economic crisis

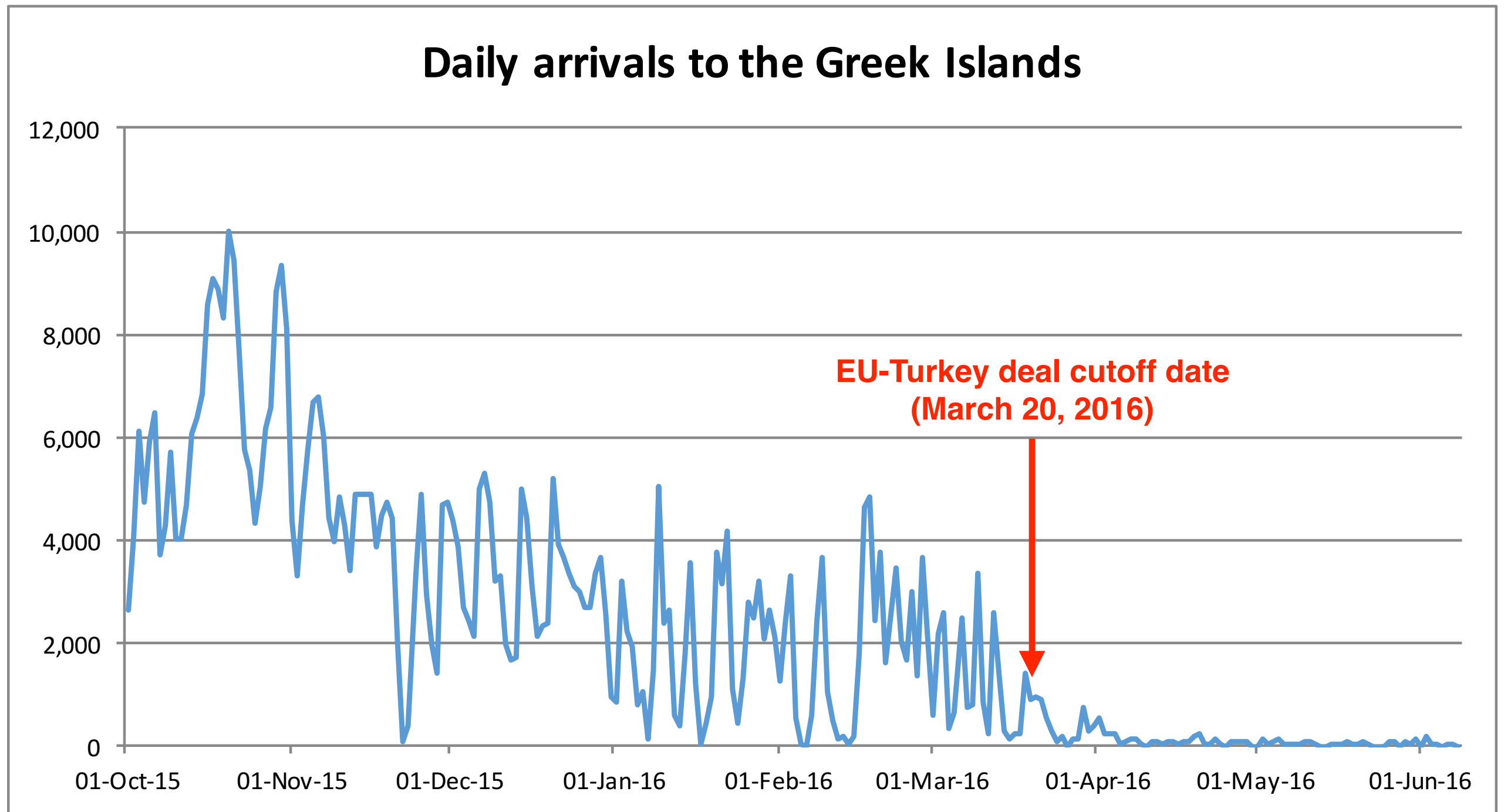
- Greek sovereign debt crisis
 - Structural weaknesses in the Greek economy
 - Triggered by the 2007-08 Great Recession
- Decline in per capita income
- Rise in unemployment
- Austerity measures
- Sharp decrease in public spending
- Radical change in the country's political landscape



Crisis response: fog and friction



Unpredictability



Lack of preparedness

- Contingency plans were extremely limited in scope
 - September 2012: News media reported a contingency plan had been developed for the provision of temporary shelter to 20,000 people for 15 days.
 - At the same time, there were over 250,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey.

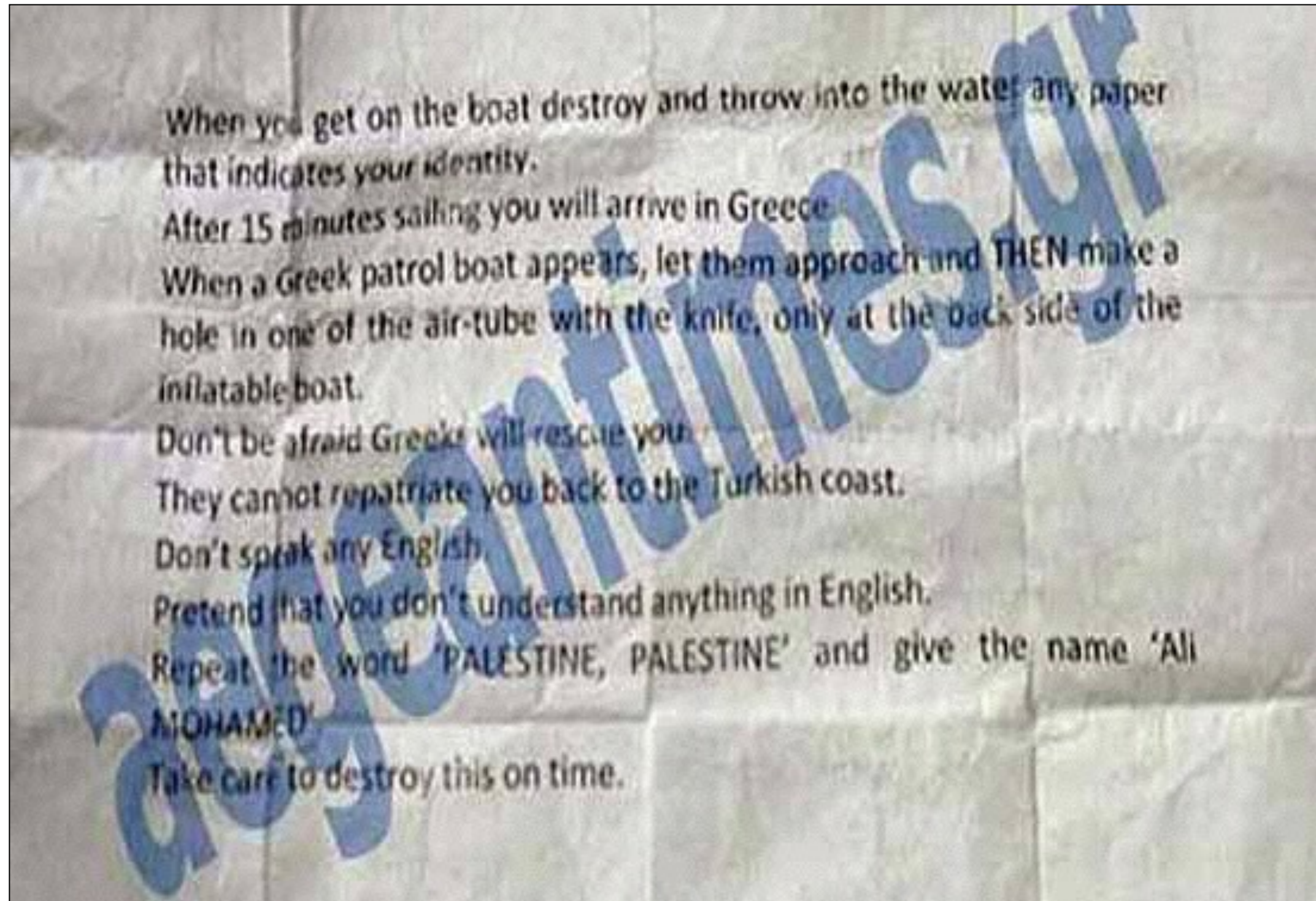


Initial response

- Reception centers were poorly designed.
- Example: Kos Island
 - 50,000 arrivals in July 2015 alone.
 - Understaffed Healthcare Center, Police Precinct and Coast Guard Station
 - No provision for mass care
 - Water and food often provided at the initiative of the island's population.
- Identification and registration an issue from the outset.
 - Migrants usually arrived with no identification documents.
 - Major concern in the aftermath of the November 2015 Paris terrorist attacks.



“Smugglers’ Blues”



Hasty emergency shelters

- Hasty shelters were opened in sport venues, school gymnasiums and tent camps.
- Although civil protection agencies had some expertise in disaster shelter, they were not brought in.
- Problems appeared as the numbers of migrants increased:
 - Overcrowded shelters
 - Health and hygiene issues
 - Fire safety concerns



Hasty shelter on the main port of Lesbos Island, 2015



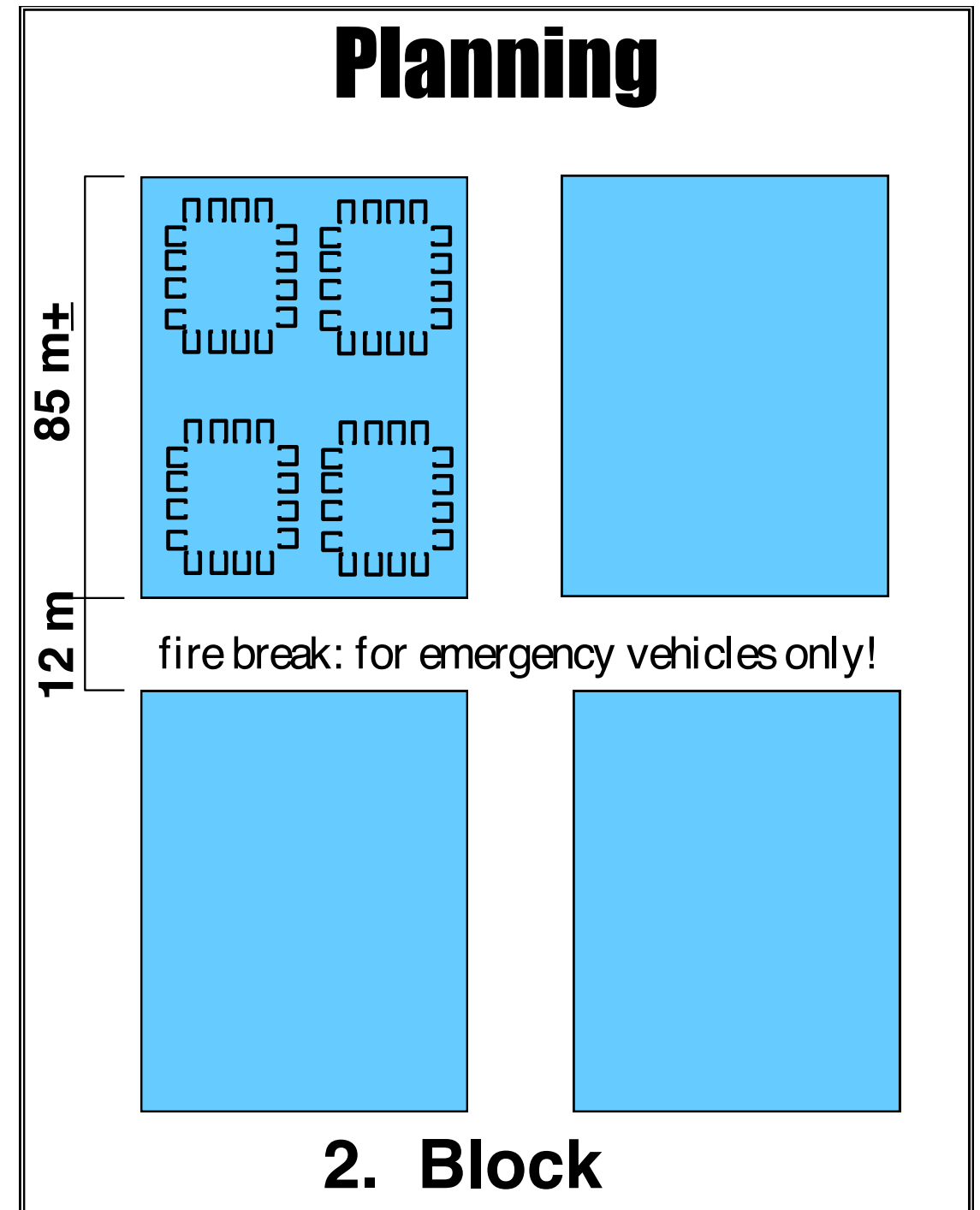
Hasty emergency shelters



“Tent-camp” disaster shelter layout



Post-earthquake disaster shelter
in Lefkada Island, 2003



Relocation



Spontaneous settlements on the mainland



Planned accommodation sites

- A.k.a. “Hotspots”
- Managed by the Greek government
- Generally better living conditions
- Level of service variable, but well below the acceptable standard in disaster shelters in Europe.
- Major problems:
 - Poor tent quality
 - Water and sanitation
 - Hygiene conditions





Source: www.bloko.gr





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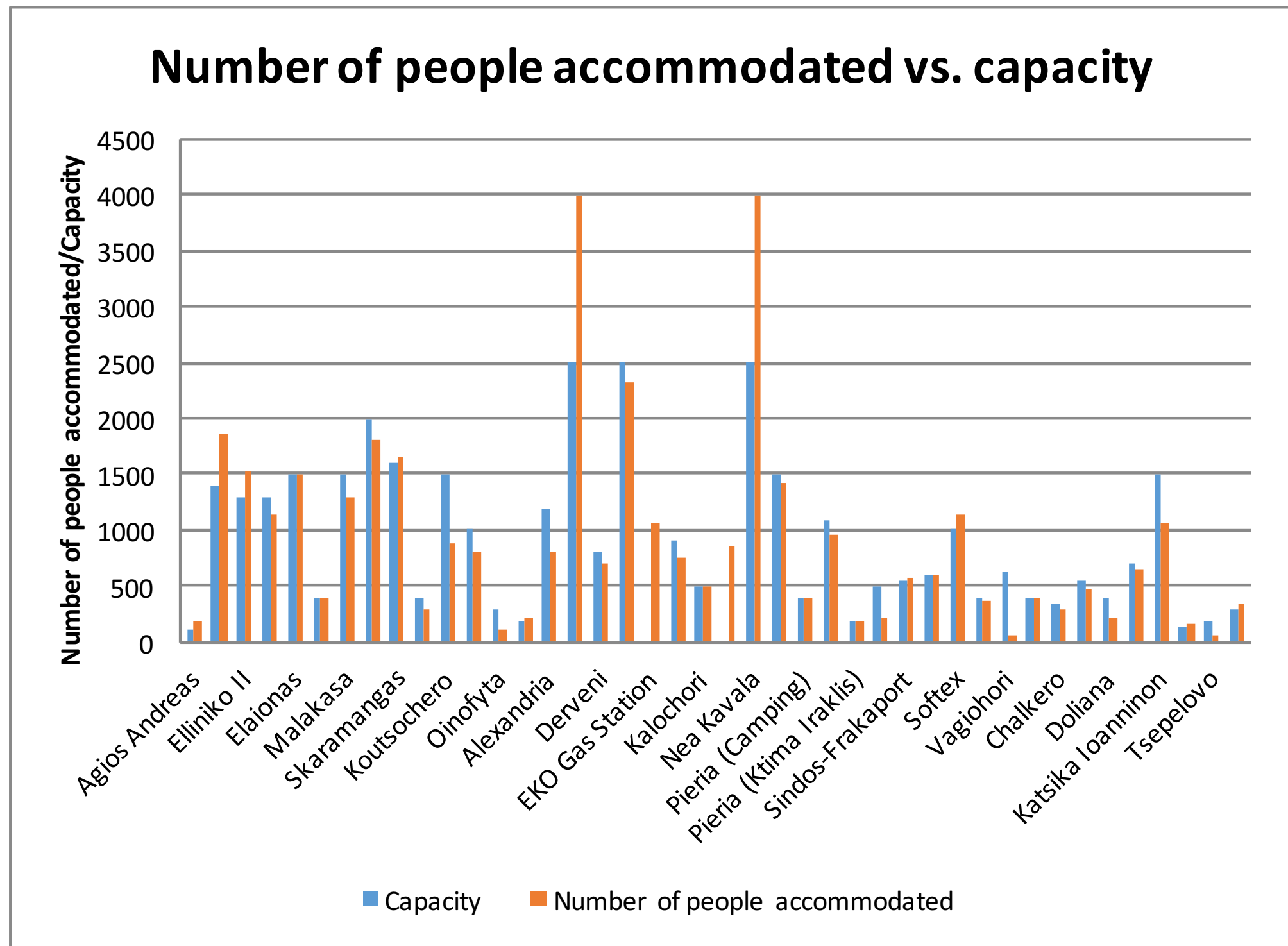


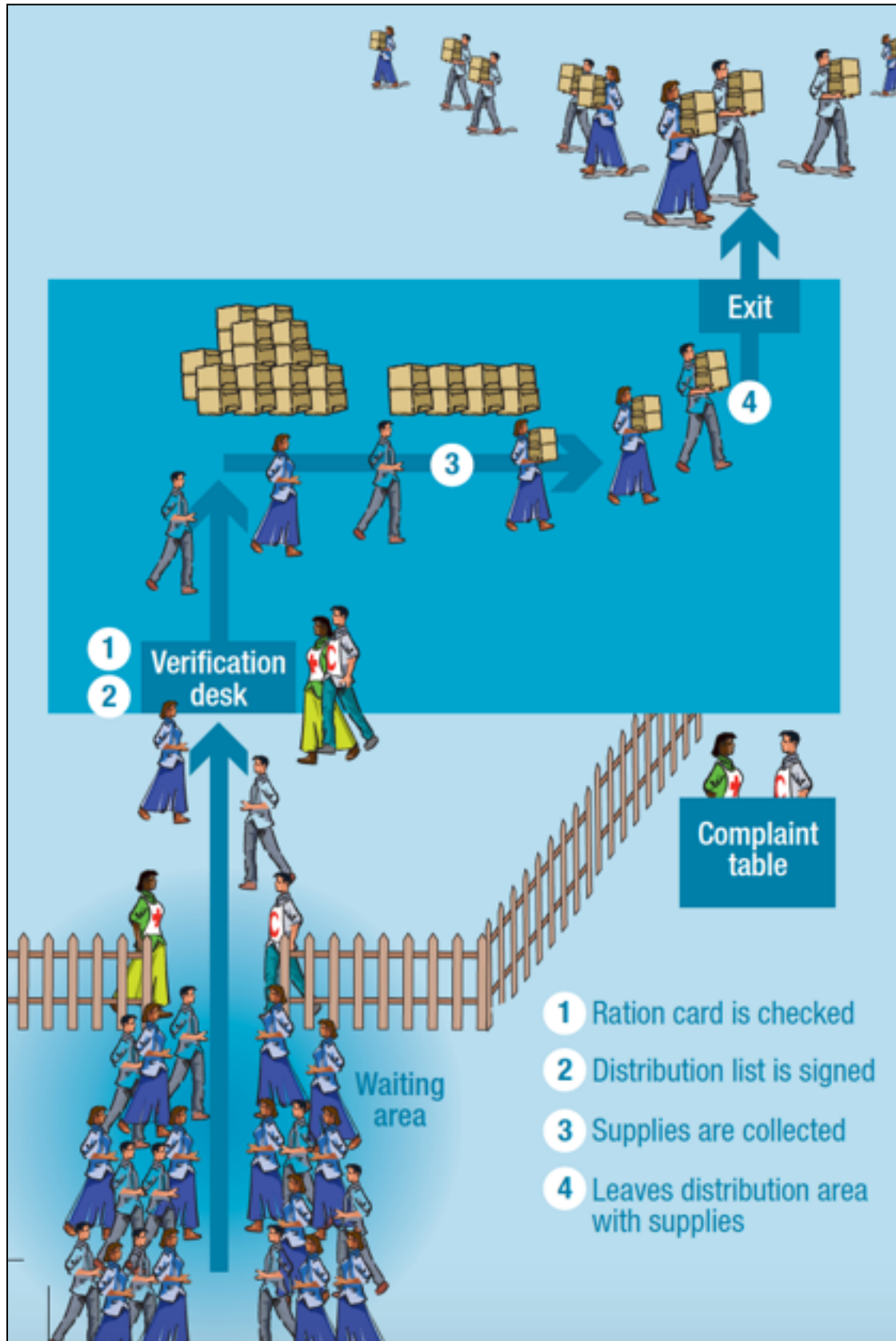
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Planned accommodation sites





Healthcare and cultural considerations

- Camp residents just want to keep moving.
 - No interest in improving their living conditions (e.g. solid waste management)
 - Due to border closures, they stay in the camps longer.
- Healthcare
 - Change in the demographic profile: from adult males to more women, children, elderly, families and people with disabilities.
 - Residents exposed to health hazards, e.g. communicable disease.
 - Some Hepatitis A cases in Northern Greece.
- Cultural considerations
 - Needed in camp layout design and addressing health needs of vulnerable populations.
 - E.g. Schedule and content of meals distributed during the Ramadan.



Coordination and information management

- Coordination was the greatest challenge.
- Coordination structures proved inadequate.
 - E.g. no health information reporting system until May 2016.
 - The situation is cutting across functional and geographic jurisdictions.
 - Emergency management agencies have no say in the matter.
- Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee
 - Ministry of Defense
 - Ministry of the Interior
 - Ministry of Health
 - Ministry of Transport
- International dimension further complicates coordination.
 - UNHCR negotiating a formal coordination role with the Ministry of the Interior.
 - Hellenic Red Cross delegated Movement activity coordination to IFRC



NGO coordination

- Far too many responding organizations.
 - UN has identified 56, but many more have swarmed the islands.
 - The Greek government never published data on the number or activities of NGOs.
- Coordination between the government and NGOs extremely problematic at first.
 - NGO coordination meeting without government officials on many islands.
 - Situation gradually improving.



Summary

- Largest population movement in Europe since WWII.
- Since 2015, over 1,000,000 people have traveled through Greece
 - About 55,000 remain in temporary shelters throughout the country.
 - It is estimated that 3,000 may have died at sea.
- Stunning lack of preparedness, in Europe and in Greece.
- The Greek economic crisis and underlying administrative weaknesses made things worse.

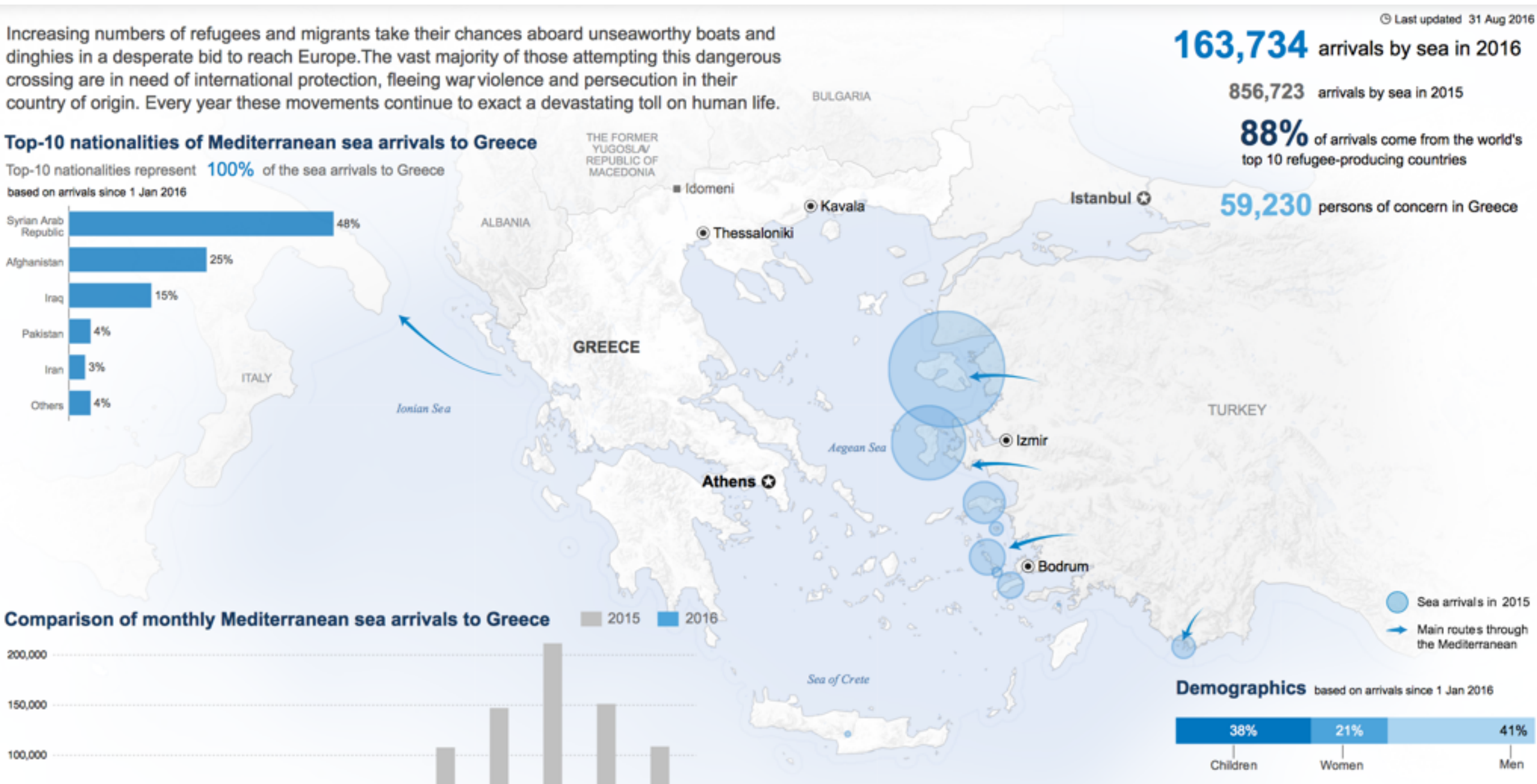


Summary

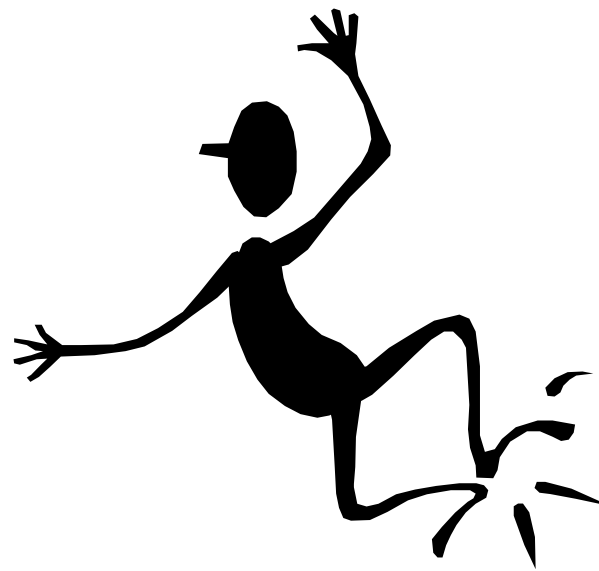
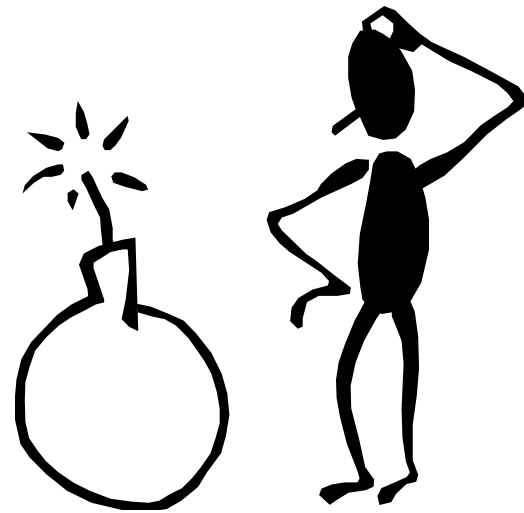
- Many emergency support functions similar to emergency management.
 - Examples: Mass care, shelter, bulk distribution, healthcare.
- However:
 - Complex and heavily politicized situation.
 - Political developments and legal issues have shaped the operational environment.
 - Unpredictability is certain!
 - Contingency planning is essential!
 - Cultural differences play a major role in field operations.
 - Transitioning vs. stable population.
 - International dimension complicates everything!



What the future holds...



Any questions?



Thank you for your attention!



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