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**NOTE**

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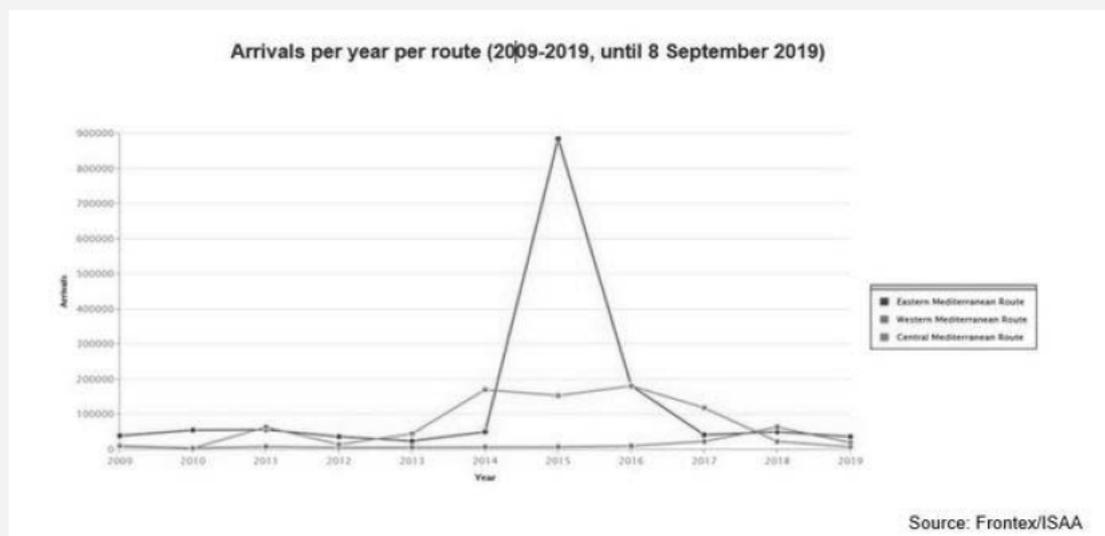
From: Presidency  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council  
Subject: Migration: State of play

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The purpose of this document is to provide background information on the current migratory situation for the lunch discussion.

## I. INTRODUCTION

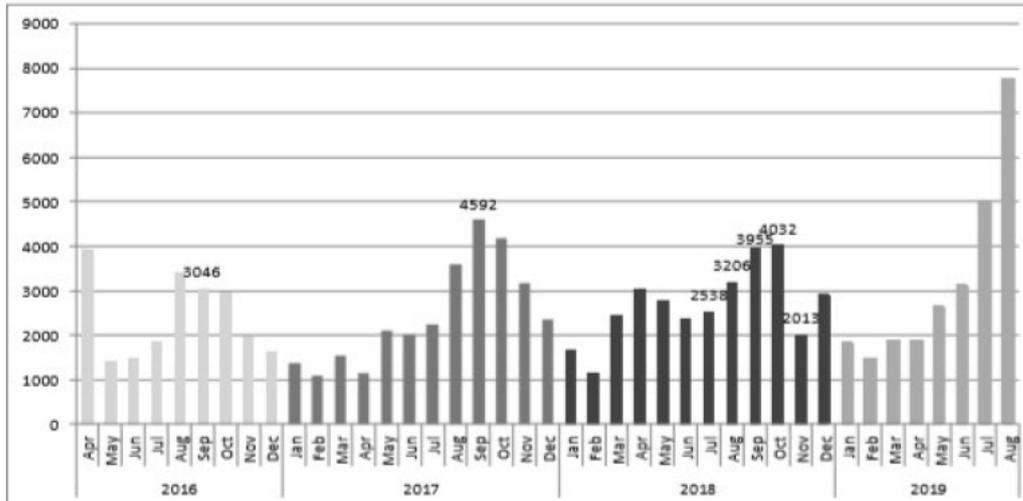
- In the summer 2019 (July and August) the migratory flows across the Mediterranean Sea were overall steady.
- According to Frontex, the number of arrivals on all three Mediterranean routes was approximately a third of all arrivals so far in 2019.



## II. THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

- On the Eastern Mediterranean route, there was a noticeable increase in arrivals of 29% from July to August. This trend continued in August and into September, when the highest weekly figures were recorded in Greece since the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement began in 2016. For 2019, the overall level of arrivals was slightly higher (13%) than the level of last year.
- There is a marked difference in the arrivals at the Greek land and sea border in terms of numbers and nationalities. On the sea route, an increasing trend has been observed since April this year.

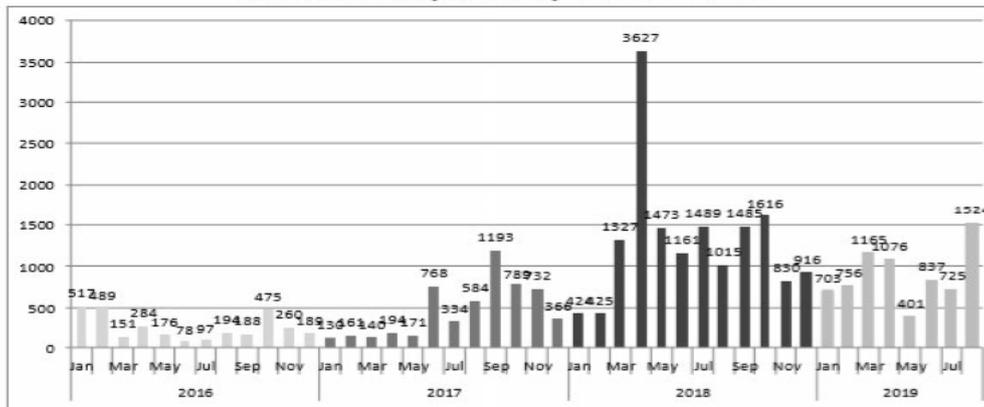
**FIGURE 5: Monthly arrivals by sea 2016-2019**



Source: DG Home computation based on Hellenic Police data. Data as of 1 September.

- With the increase in sea arrivals, the hotspots are crowded and urgent measures are rolled out by the Greek government. These consist of transferring migrants from the islands to the mainland, including a significant number of unaccompanied minors; immediate relocation of unaccompanied minors whose requests for family reunification have been approved; increased border surveillance with the assistance of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA) and NATO and a revision of the framework for asylum by the end of the year.
- Arrivals at the land border with Turkey fluctuated since the beginning of the year but in August a significant increase of more than 100% took place. The increase in August concerns all main nationalities, including a sizeable flow of Turkish nationals (46%), followed by Iraqi (12%) and Syrians (6%). In 2019 so far, Turkish nationals represent 76% of total arrivals by land.

**FIGURE 3 – Monthly arrivals by land in 2016-2019**

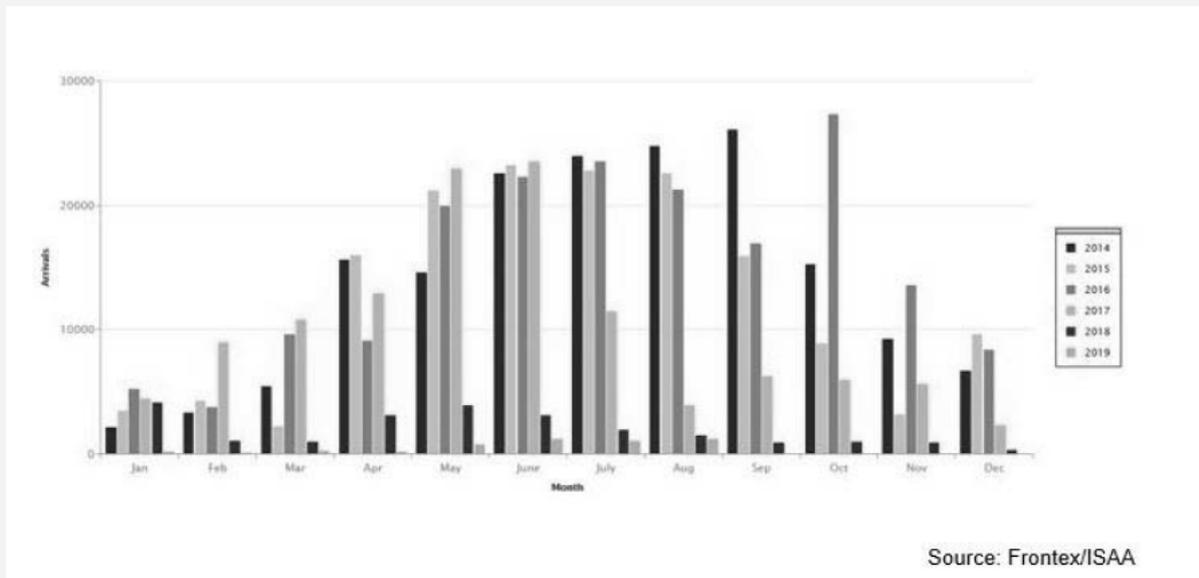


Source: EBCGA data from January 2016 to June 2017. DG Home computation based on Hellenic Police data since June 2017. Data as of 1 September.

- Arrivals by sea to Greece have been on the rise since May 2019 with a significant increase observed from mid-July to the end of August. In August, the highest monthly number of arrivals since the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement has been recorded. In August, mainly Afghan nationals (42%), followed by Syrians (17%) and Iraqis (8%) arrived in Greece by sea
- In terms of number of arrivals per capita, the most substantial increase in arrivals from Turkey has taken place in Cyprus. In 2019 more than 5 000 arrivals were observed crossing the Green Line whereas only 34 persons arrived by boat directly to the government controlled areas from Lebanon. The high number of arrivals, as well as a high number of asylum applications in 2019, 8 500 mainly lodged by Syrians, Georgians, Indians, Bangladeshi and Pakistani, put a significant burden on reception and asylum processing capacities.

### III. CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

- On the Central Mediterranean route, the number of arrivals in July and August were steady, i.e. app. 1 300 each month. With a total of 8 000 arrivals this year, a decrease of 62% can be registered compared to last year. Most probably due to the season and prevailing security conditions in Libya, there is nevertheless an intensified departure pace since May. More NGOs than in previous months are performing search and rescue activities, mostly in the Libyan SAR zone.



- In July and August, there were 10 SAR events involving a total of 981 migrants (mostly Tunisian, Sudanese and Pakistani nationals) disembarked in Italy and Malta. A large part were relocated to other Member States on an informal, voluntary basis.

#### IV. THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

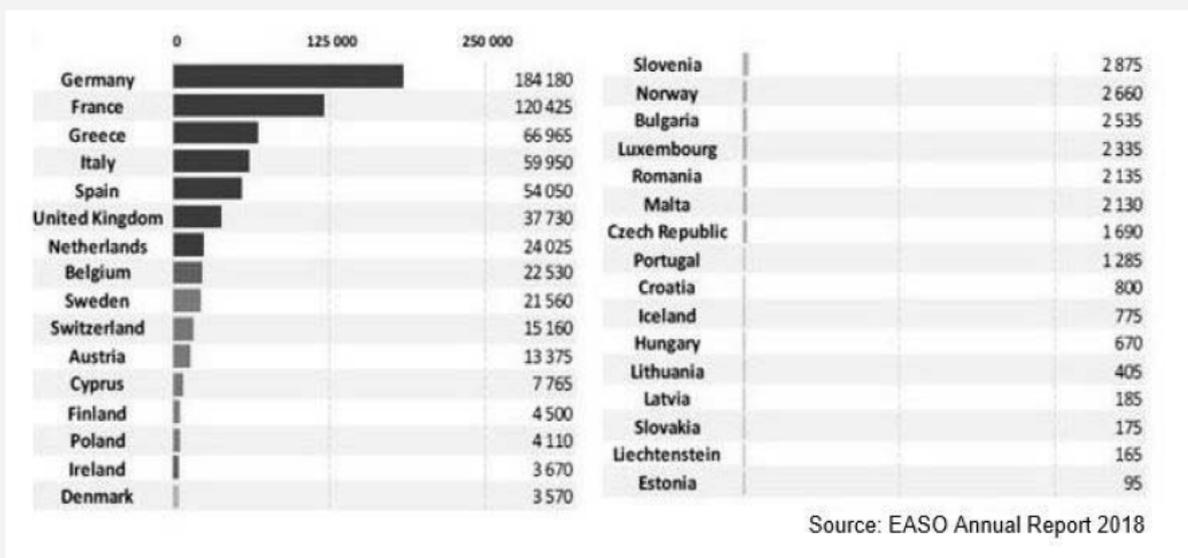
- The number of arrivals in Spain in July and August remained stable at approximately 3 000 arrivals per month. The total number of arrivals to Spain in 2019 is 20 000 persons, which is 44% less than the same period last year. Main nationalities are Moroccans (28,9%) followed by Malians and Guineans. There was a sudden increase in the number of Algerians arriving in August but the overall share in 2019 remains low.
- The Moroccan Coast Guard reported to have prevented in 2019 so far 7 683 migrants to depart by sea. Of the total 15 682 sea arrivals, this means a prevention rate of 33%.

#### V. THE WESTERN BALKAN ROUTE

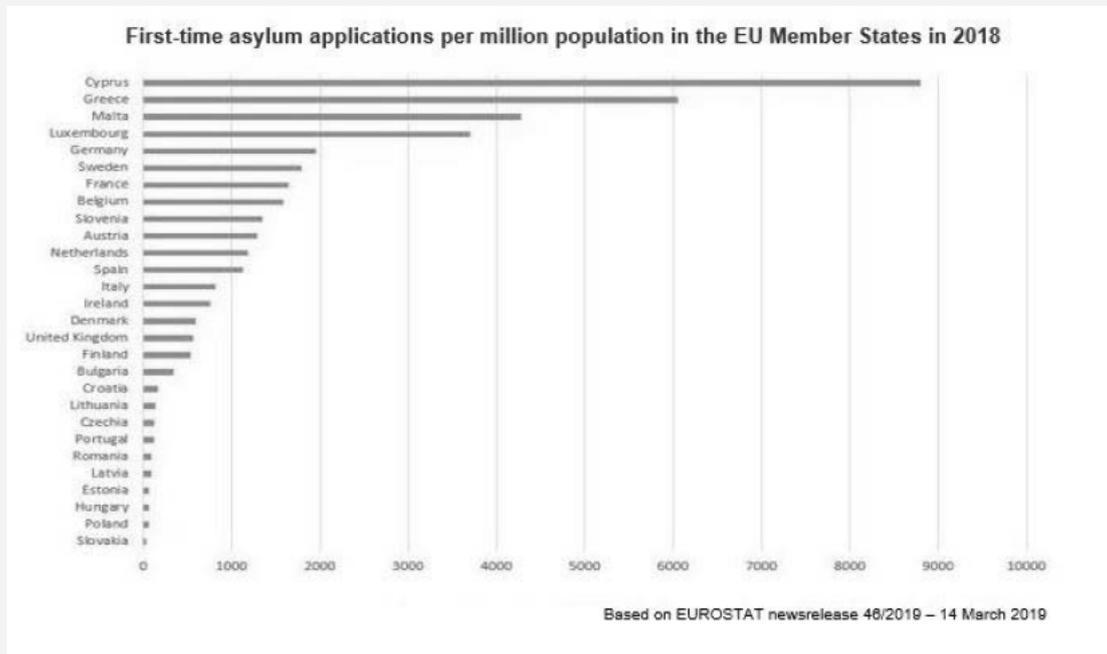
- On the Western Balkan route 6 200 illegal border crossings were detected this year, which is a 90 % increase compared to the same time last year. The main nationalities were Afghans (46%) followed by Iranian (11%) and Iraqi (10%) nationals, followed by Pakistani and Turkish nationals (5% each).

#### VI. ASYLUM STATISTICS

- Looking at numbers of asylum applications, in absolute figures the Member States mostly affected in 2018 are Germany, France, Greece, Italy and Spain.



- In relative figures (in comparison to population), the most affected Member States in 2018 are Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Luxembourg, Germany, Sweden, France and Belgium.



- The relative figures for the period of January to July 2019 are shown in the below-graph.

