

JEAN MONNET CHAIR EUROPEAN MIGRATION STUDIES

ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION IN EUROPE (ECMEU)

REPORTS PRESENTATION

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MIGRATION IN EUROPE COUNTRY REPORT GREECE

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1. Introduction

This paper provides an insight of the migration phenomenon in Greece over the last years, with a focus on the most recent data available, collected through the official European Union database, Eurostat.

Greece has been one of the most affected countries by the migrant crisis of 2015, since the eastern Mediterranean migration route became an important pathway for migrants and asylum seekers coming from countries in the Middle East and Asia.

The administrative structure responsible for migration issues reports to the Ministry of Migration Policy, created in 2016 by the Government to tackle the migrant crisis. It is responsible for planning and implementing national migration and asylum policy, providing protection to individuals that fulfil the criteria for international protection and coordinating all the relevant services at the national and regional level. The Ministry supervises the activities of different bodies, such as the Asylum Service and the Service of First Reception.

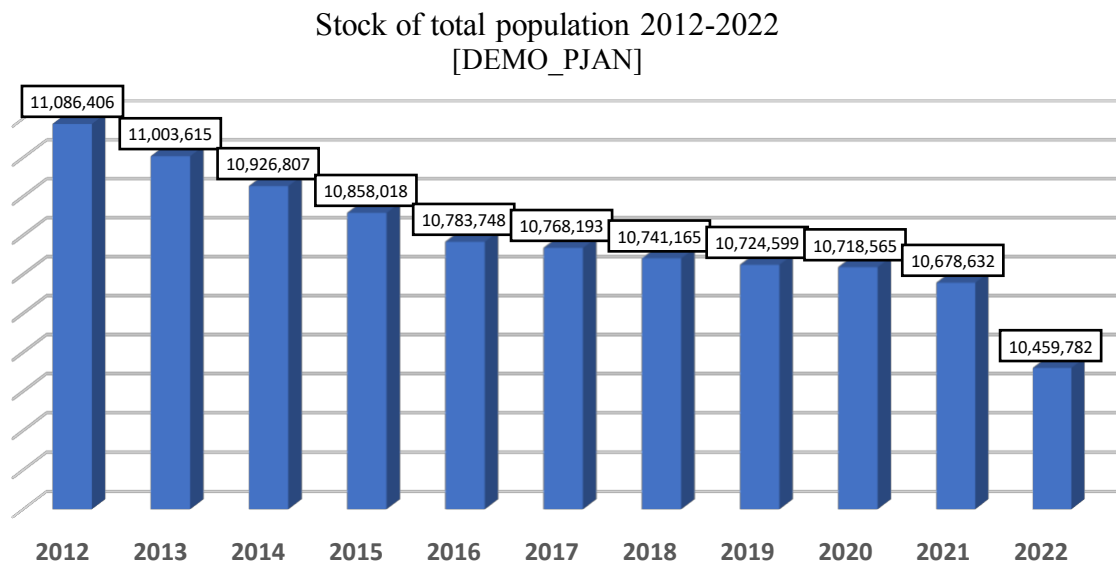
Migration policies in Greece had considerably changed over the years, even if a persistent restrictive attitude can be recorded from the 90s onwards. After several regularization programs delivered between 1998 and 2008, in 2008 the policy focused on border control and reform of asylum system. In 2019 the new Government lead by Kyriakos Mitsotakis undertook a major restrictive turn, delimiting access to the asylum procedure and regularizing the practice of detention of applicants up to 18 months. It also reinforced the fence along the land border with Turkey and heavily securitized the issue of migration.

Since 2020, the main issues persisting in Greece are alleged pushbacks at the Greece-Turkish border, insufficient framework of assistance for asylum seekers, poor reception conditions and the absence of an integration plan.

In the following paragraphs, we'll address the main dimensions of the migration phenomenon in Greece, starting from the analysis of the stock of total and immigrant population. We will then look at the main trends in population growth over the past decade and subsequently focus on the flow of immigrants entering the country. The asylum seekers issue will be addressed analyzing gender, age and citizenship of applicants and their share on total migration. The final part of the paper will deal with the integration of migrants in Greek society, taking into consideration different indicators.

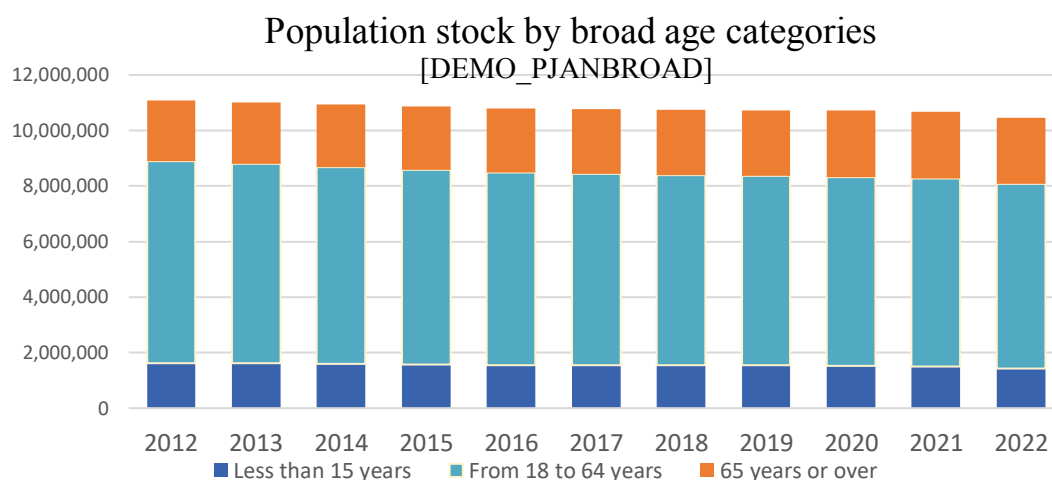
2. Stock of total population

This section will provide an overview of the stock of the Greek population taken as a whole. In the first part, we will present how the population changed by looking at the data on January 1 of each year. The second part will focus on interpreting the results and understanding the economic changes over the past few years.



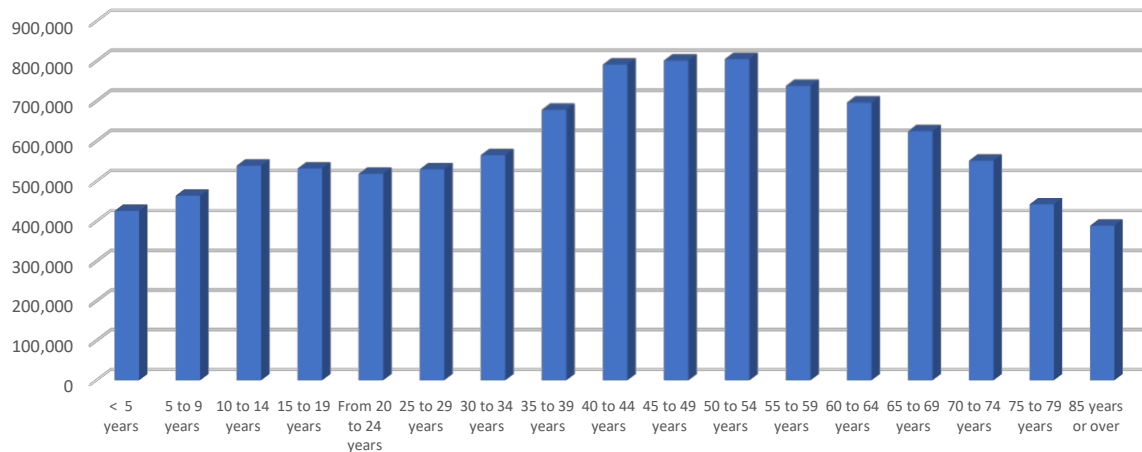
This graph shows Greek population trend over the past ten years. In 2022 the stock of total population was of 10.459.782 million people, while in 2012 the number of people amounted to 11.086.406. Hence, we can say that in ten years the population has decreased by 626.624, registering a relevant loss of -5,65%.

2.1 Stock of total population by age



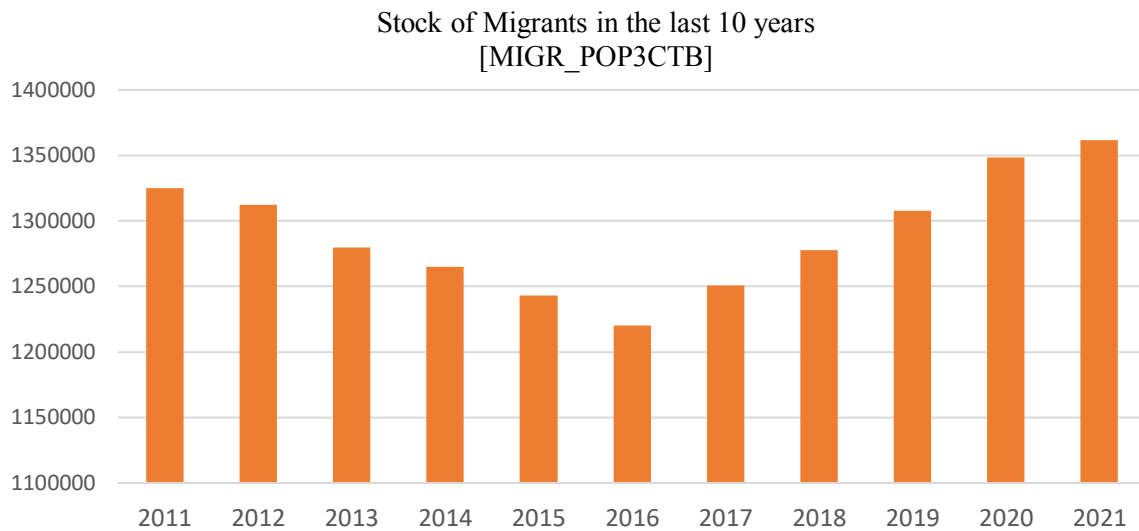
Through this graph, we can better understand the demographic situation in Greece. Indeed, the country is one of the fastest-aging countries in the entire European Union. There are fewer young people, especially those under the age of 30, while the majority of the population consists of more people between the ages of 40 and 55. People between the ages of 50 and 75 actually outnumber the younger generation.

Stock of Total population by age Greece in 2022
[DEMO_PJANGROUP]



This graph shows the Greek population divided by age categories. The population is largely made up of people between the ages of 18 and 65, but the most remarkable data is the superiority of people over the age of 65 over young people under the age of 15. Indeed, in 2022 people with less than 15 years were 1.428.986 while those with more than 65 years amounted to 2.373.153 with a difference of 944.167 people.

3. Stock of migrants in the last 10 years



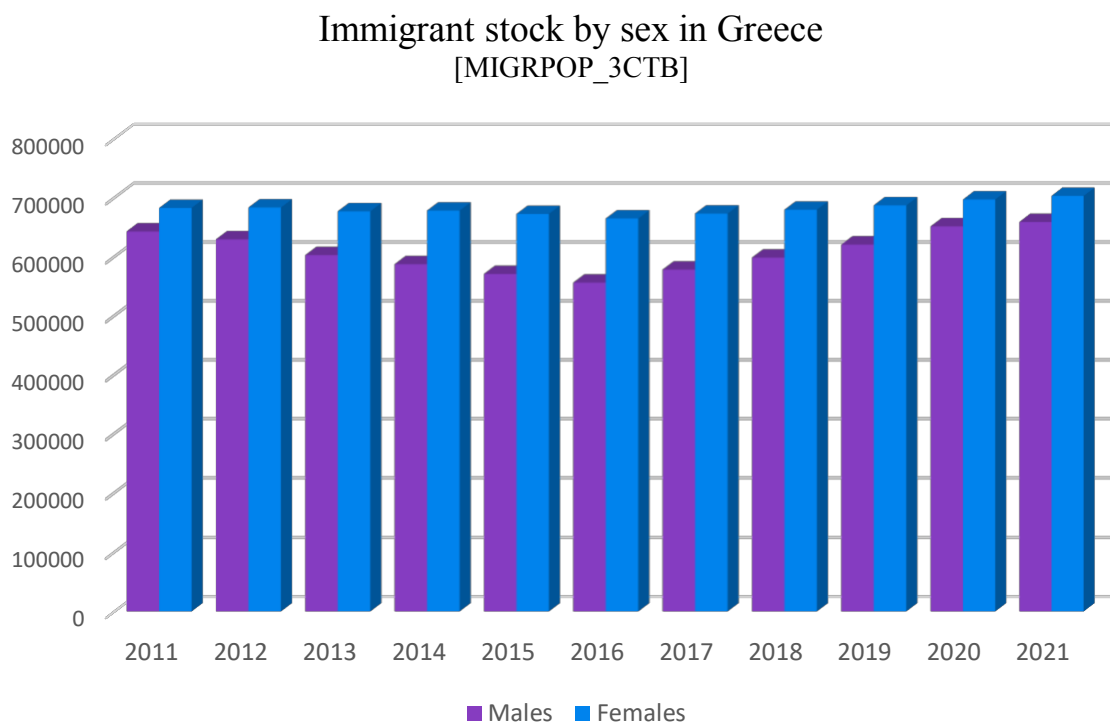
Greece has always played an important role in immigration especially due to its geographical centrality. Therefore, in the last fifteen years, Greece has become a receptor for migrants and a permanent destination for migrants mainly from central and eastern Europe.

This graph shows the stock of migrants in Greece over the past decade taking into account those born in a foreign country. We immediately notice a slight decrease in migrants' arrivals in 2015-2016 however the period of the so-called European migrant crisis was evident in the following years. Indeed, the 2015 Middle East crisis led many migrants to seek international protection from Pakistan, Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq in Greece. This transformed Greece from a transit country to a host country, taking in huge numbers of migrants, most often irregular ones. The trend has increased in recent years, and now Greece is still one of the countries with the most migrants in the European Union. In 2021 the stock of migrants was 1.361.720.

4. Immigration stock by category

In this section we will provide an overview of migrants arriving in Greece by considering their age, sex, country of birth and reason for migration.

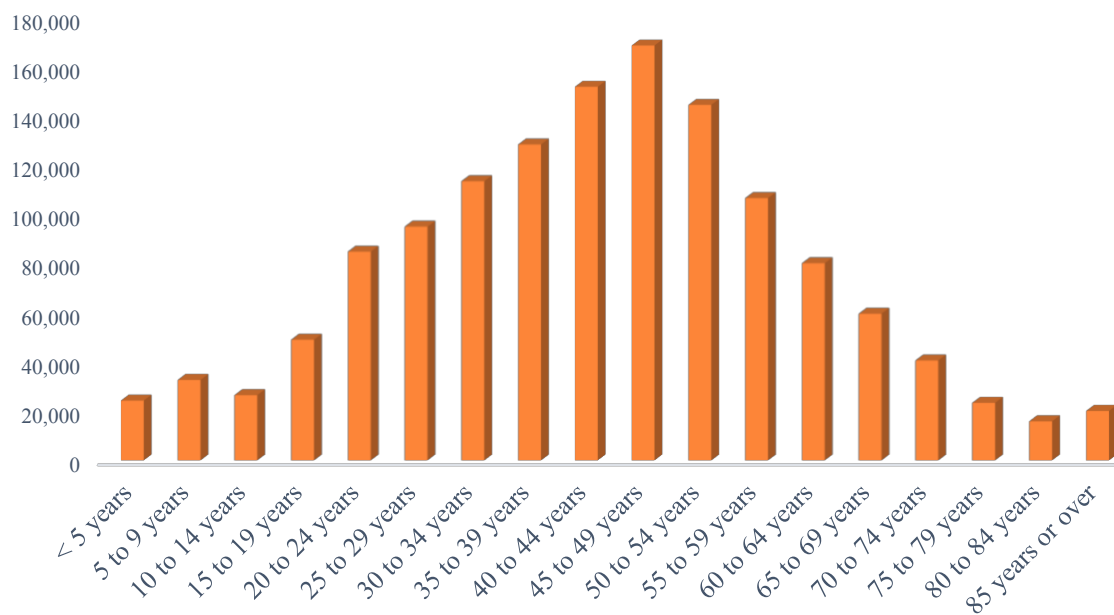
4.1 Immigration stock by sex



In this graph we can see the total stock of migrants divided by sex from 2011 to 2021, which is the latest available data. The stock of male migrants as of January 1, 2021, is 658.701 while females are 703.019. Overall, over the years, it is possible to notice a majority of female migrants.

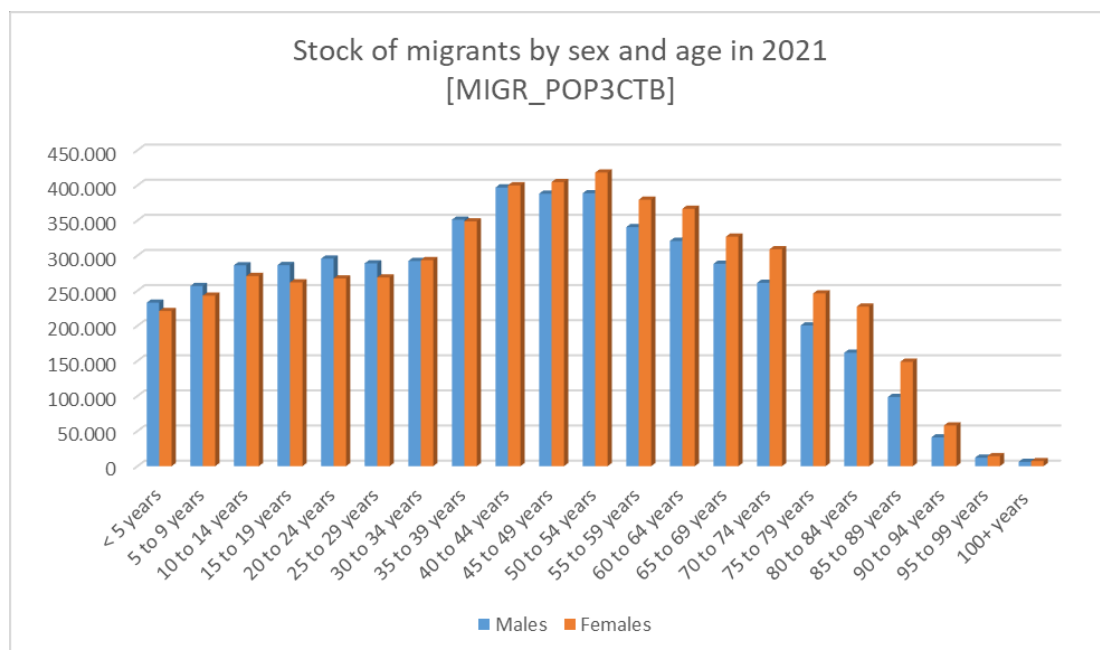
4.2 Immigration stock by age

As for the stock of migrants by age due to a lack of data in the Eurostat dataset [MIGR_IMM3CTB], we used the dataset for the general population [MIGR_POP3CTB] selecting only as country of birth those born in foreign countries. In this graph, therefore, we can see that among children most of them are between 5 to 9 years while there is a prominence of migrants between the ages of 45 and 49, with a value of 168,539 people.



Immigrant stock by age in Greece on January 1st 2021
Source: Eurostat, [MIGR_POP3CTB]

4.3 Immigration stock by sex and age

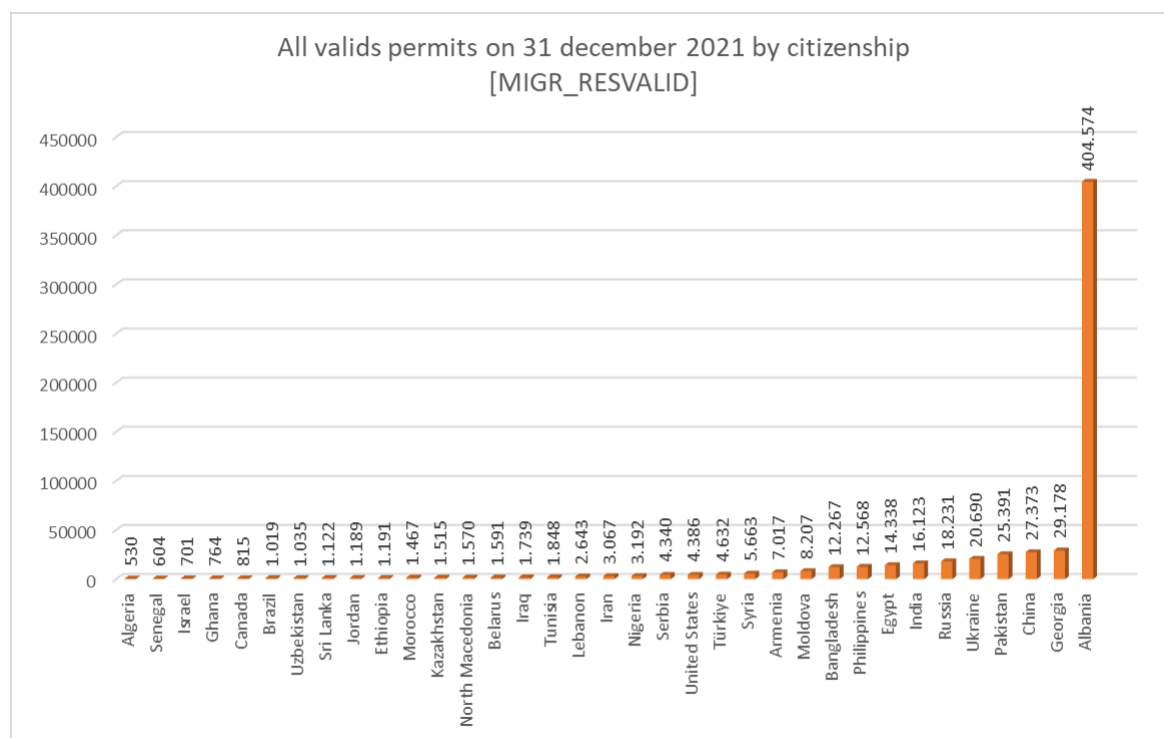


In this graph we want to focus on the correlation between gender and age group of people who migrated in 2021 to Greece, based on the match between the two data on the Eurostat dataset [MIGR_POP3CTB]; as we can see the majority of migrants are female, contrary of the mainstream narratives that can be found on the media. Although, this trend affects only migrant over the age of 35 it is more relevant in migrants who have more than 50 years.

Even more considerable is the gap from 70 years, probably due to the different average life of male and female subjects.

Instead, the male migrants between the age of 0-29 exceed, albeit slightly, the number of female migrants.

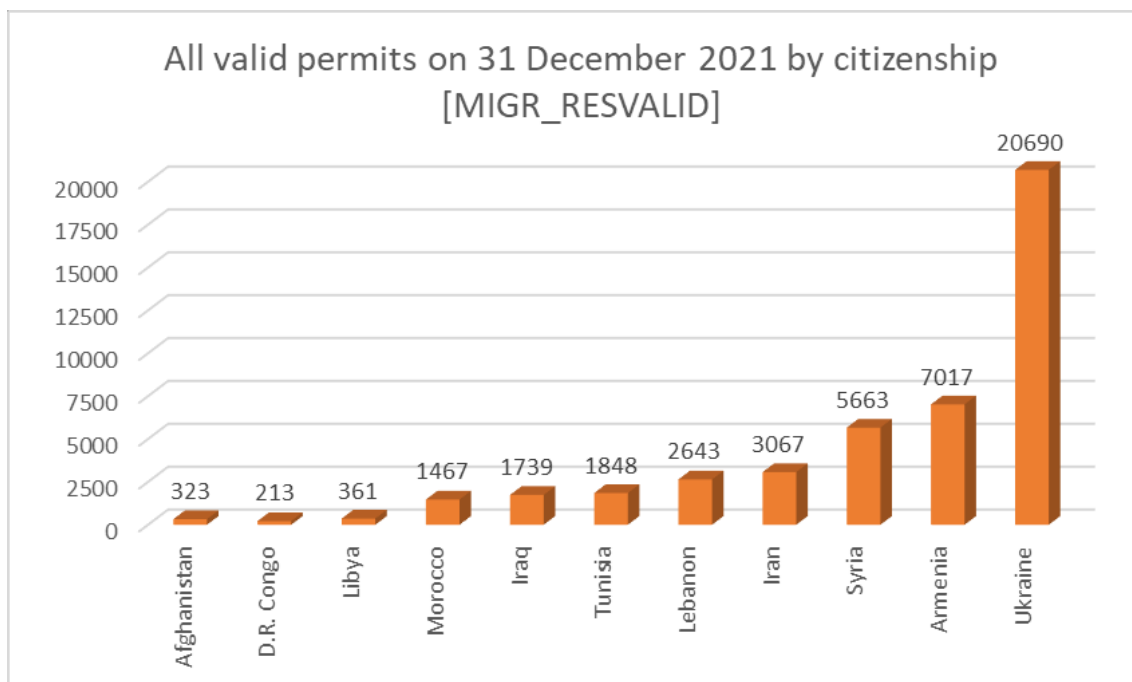
4.4 Immigration stock by citizenship



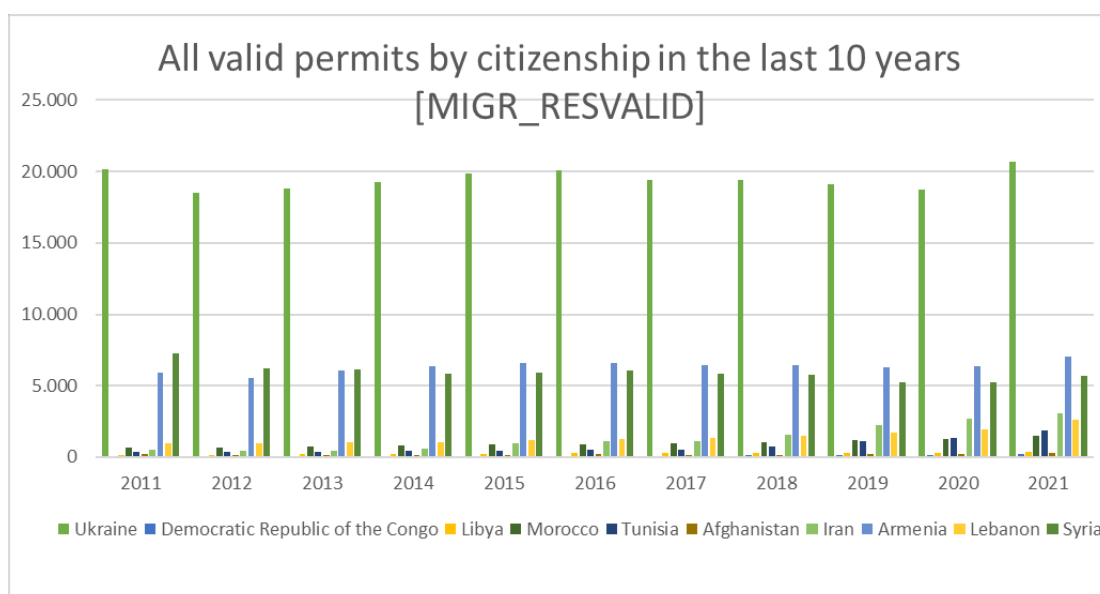
Given the lack of data referring to the stock of valid permits based to the country of birth [MIGR_IMM3CTB], we used the dataset referring to citizenship [MIGR_RESVALID]. As we can see in the graph the Albanian migrants are the largest number of migrants that have a valid permit to stay in Greece in 2021. If we look at the Eurostat database [MIGR_RESVALID] data from the previous years, the trend doesn't change. The reason is mainly given also by the geographical proximity of the two states; furthermore, Greece is the European Union country closest to Albania.

An interesting fact is given by the number of Chinese migrants with a valid permit in Greece in 2021; in fact, they rank third on the total number of permits; this seems to be in contrast with the daily narrative of the migratory flow in Europe, and more specifically, migrants arriving by sea in Greece.

4.5 Immigration stock by citizenship focused on specific countries



In this paragraph we want to focus our attention on the number of migrants with valid permits who come from war zones or unstable countries. Given the lack of data referring to the stock of valid permits to the country of birth [MIGR_IMM3CTB], we used the dataset referring to citizenship [MIGR_RESVALID]. The data reveals that if we consider the family, employment and education channel of entrance the number of the migrants that came from war or unstable areas, beside Ukraine, who are legally presented in Greece is not so consistent. If we want to investigate in the trend is changed in the last 10 years, we can see, in the graph below, that migrants from Iran, Tunisia, Morocco, more than doubled.

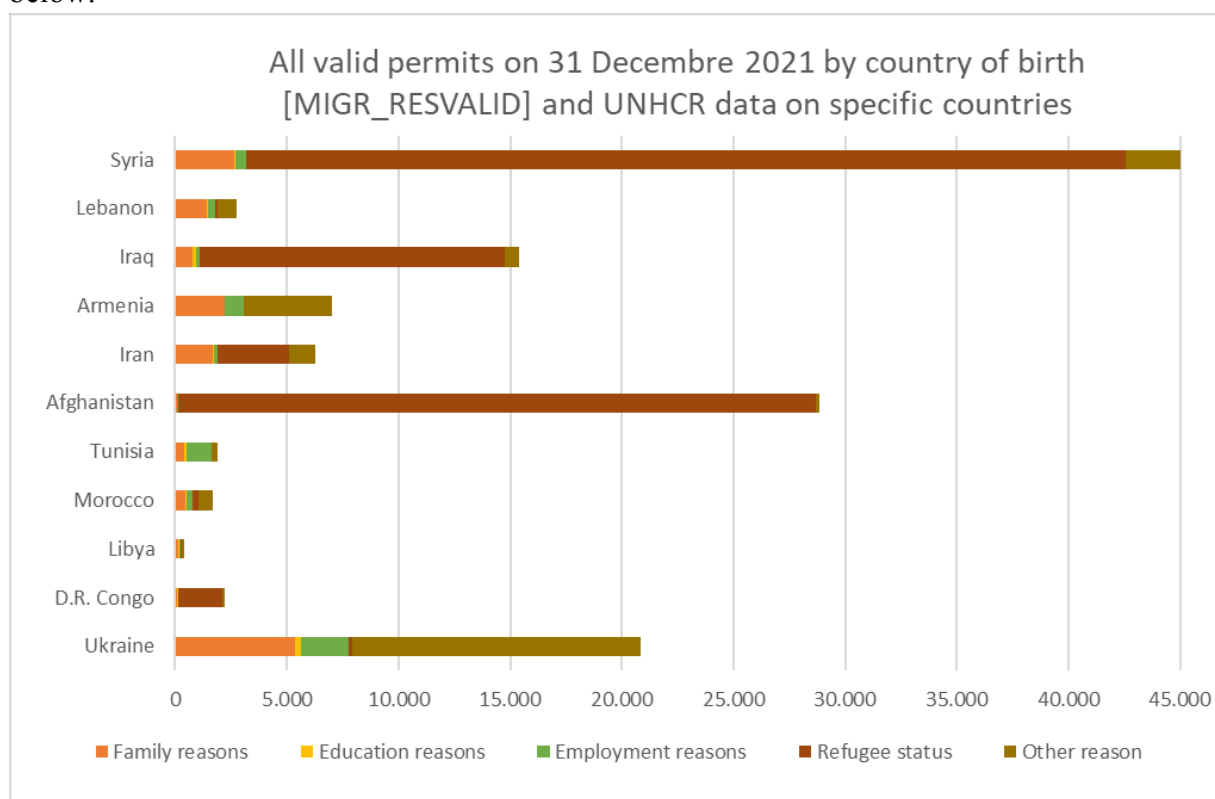


Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Ukraine	742	885	836	850	893	564	573	573	354	441
D.R. Congo	2	5	1	9	18	13	22	13	14	21
Libya	28	37	54	73	81	55	29	37	13	13
Morocco	25	42	78	68	74	97	169	168	102	100
Afghanistan	3	10	14	32	16	8	15	36	21	29
Iran	40	30	143	453	233	113	541	686	440	277
Armenia	239	329	337	345	425	303	338	325	122	207
Iraq	23	29	53	107	220	151	160	148	114	230
Lebanon	50	103	107	160	199	184	220	304	239	617
Syria	272	261	214	364	534	319	273	161	90	165

In the Tunisia case, in 2011 we had 369 migrants, while in 2021 they were 1841; this is, as we know, because in the last years the instable situation in the country has led more and more inhabitants to become economic migrant.

If we look at Syrian migrants, on the other hand, their number slowly decrease through years.

The picture change if we put in the count also the refugee permit, using the data available on UNHCR¹, since the lack of these data in the Eurostat database, as showed in the graph below.



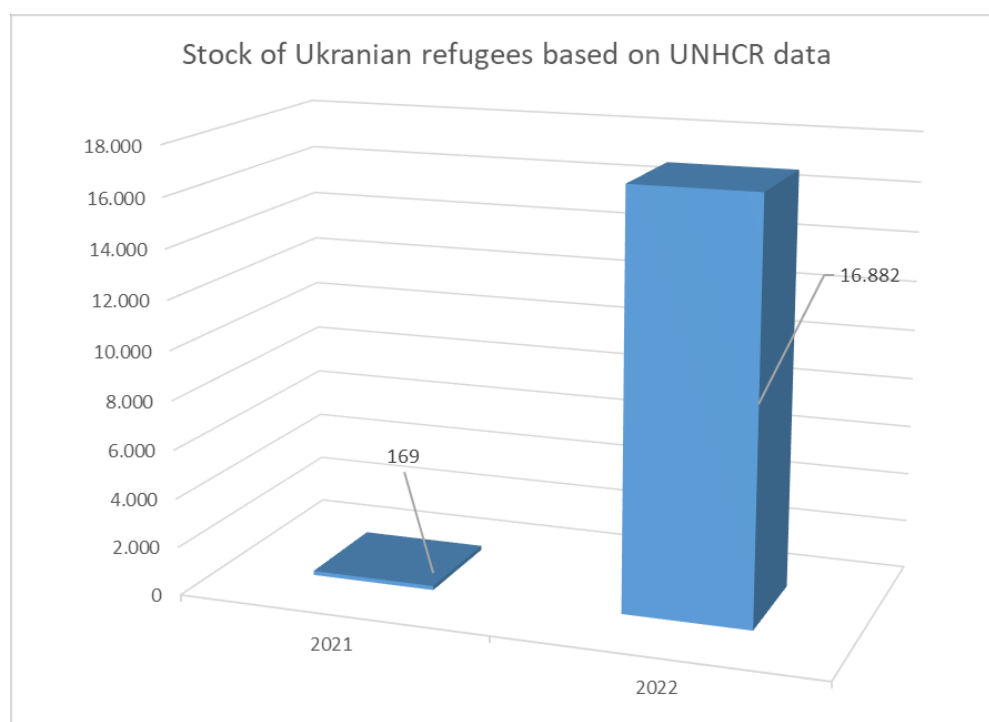
¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=Yz8S2w>

Citizen	Family reasons	Education reasons	Employment reasons	Refugee status	Other reason
Ukraine	5.364	245	2.153	169	12.928
D.R. Congo	62	49	24	1.994	78
Libya	144	37	56	65	124
Morocco	469	23	304	230	671
Tunisia	399	84	1.126	28	239
Afghanistan	76	1	66	28.543	180
Iran	1.690	49	158	3.201	1.170
Armenia	2.199	43	827	12	3.948
Iraq	791	165	162	13.634	621
Lebanon	1.414	65	323	84	841
Syria	2.621	52	522	39.372	2.468

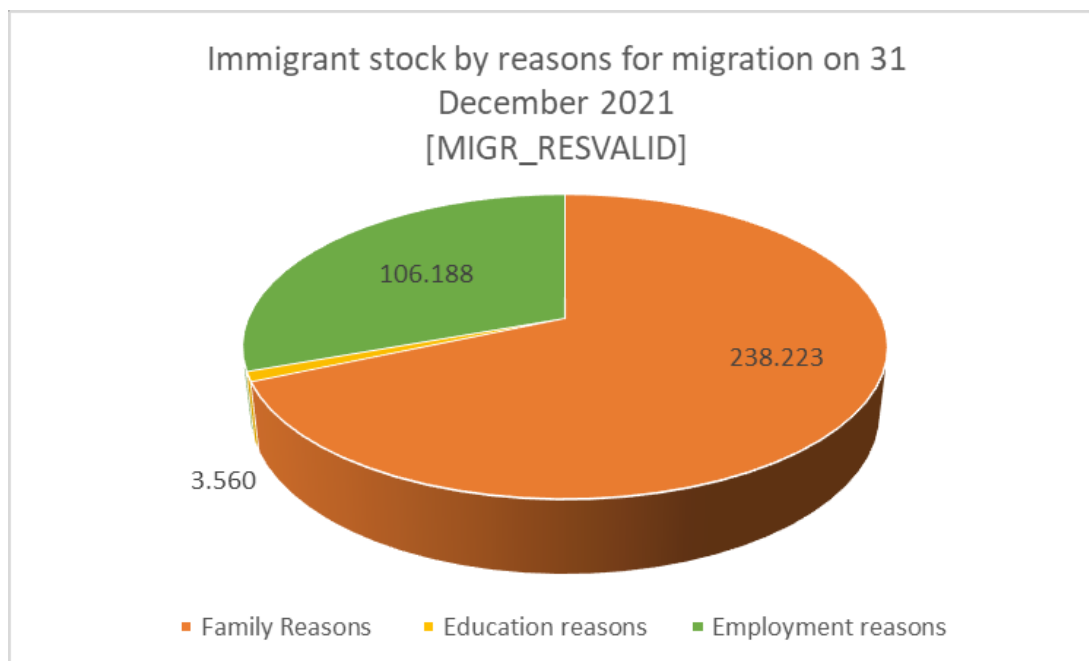
As we can see, for Afghani, Congolese, Iraqi and Syrian migrants the refugee status is the main used, while for the other citizenship used the picture doesn't been huge affected by the UNHCR added data.

4.4.1 Specific focus on the increase of Ukrainian refugees

We'd like to show how the Ukrainian war effected the number of refugees in the Greek territory, so we put it out in the following graph. As we can see, the number of Ukrainian refugees increase 10 time from the year before.



4.5 Immigration stock by reason for migration

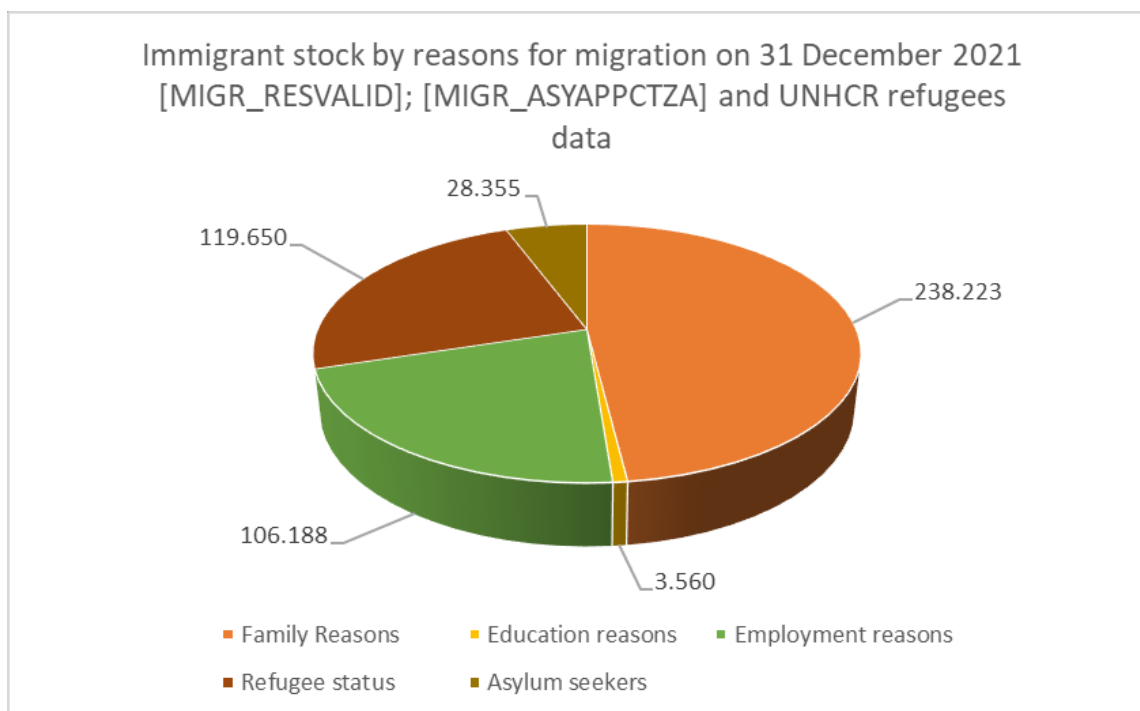


The pie chart shows the reason for migration in Greece, in 2021, based on the data of the Eurostat database [MIGR_RESVALID]. As we can see, the main reason to migrate is the family one, that alone represent almost the 70% of the total (precisely 68%), followed by employment reasons (31%) and lastly the education reasons (1%). This trend doesn't change if we look on the previously years.

As we know, the family entrance is so popular and is more used than the others because it is more easily for economic migrants to enter by this channel. In fact – otherwise – they wouldn't enter in the destination country.

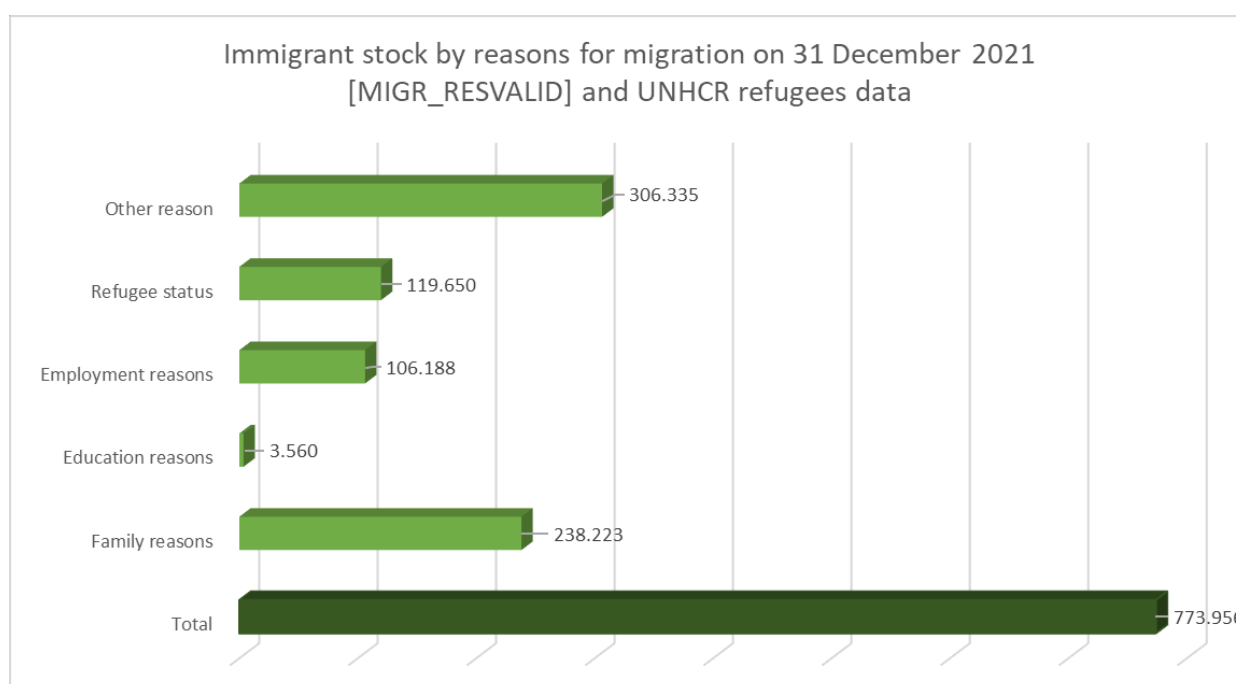
To give a more complete picture we add, in the chart below, the data of refugees that are missing in the Eurostat database, extrapolated by UNHCR data² of 2021, and the Eurostat data of asylum seekers [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA] in the same year.

² Data found on: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=iVEi6v> . In fact, these data are not available on Eurostat database.



As it shows the main reason to migrate remains the family one, that here represents almost the 50% of the total permits (precisely 48%), followed by refugee status (24%), employment reason (21%), asylum seekers (6%) and again, lastly, educational reason (1%). As we mentioned before, the majority of refugee migrants came from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

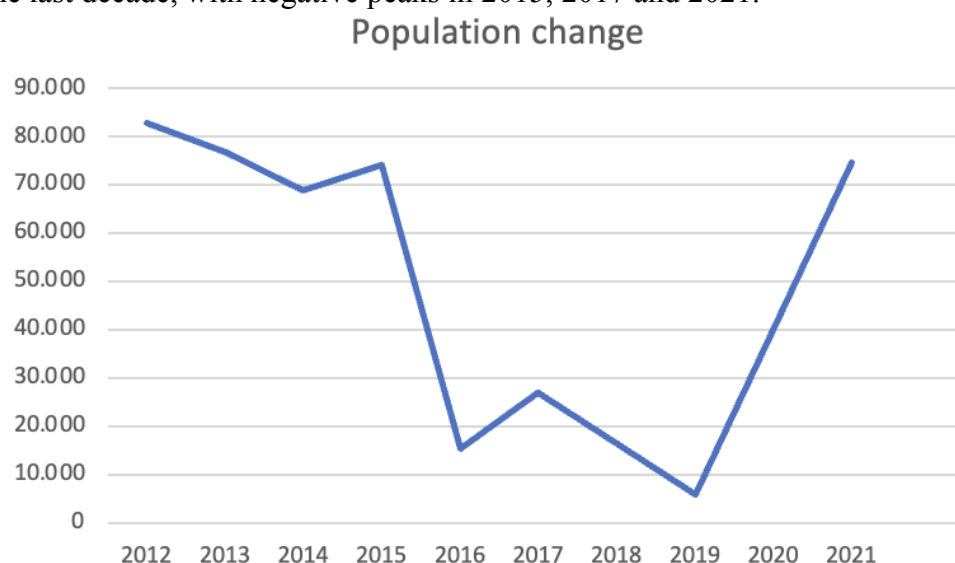
Lastly, the following graph it is a summary of all the available data founded in Eurostat database [MIGR_RESVALID] and UNHCR refugees' data.



5. Population growth

The population growth is an indicator that represents the increasing number of people in a certain population. It is determined by the rates of death, birth, immigration and emigration. As the previous tabs point out, from 2012 to 2022, Greece experienced a relevant decrease of 5,65% of the population. The aging population, the low fertility rate of 1.3 births per woman, the financial crisis and the consequent emigration are the major causes of this decrease.

The following graph shows the discretely decrease of the absolute numbers of the population during the last decade, with negative peaks in 2015, 2017 and 2021.



Source: Eurostat [DEMO_GIND]

The table below shows the absolute numbers and the crude rate of the total population change of the Greek's population during the last decade.

Year	Population	Rate
2012	-82.791	-7,5
2013	-76.808	-7
2014	-68.789	-6,3
2015	-74.270	-6,9
2016	-15.555	-1,4
2017	-27.028	-2,5
2018	-16.566	-1,5
2019	-6.034	-0,6
2020	-39.933	-3,7
2021	-74.822	-7

Source: Eurostat: [DEMO_GIND]

The population change is the difference of population between the end and the beginning of a specific time (generally a year). It is determined by the natural population change (birth minus death) and the net migration (immigrant minus emigrant plus statistical adjustment).

The table shows the absolute numbers of the natural population change.

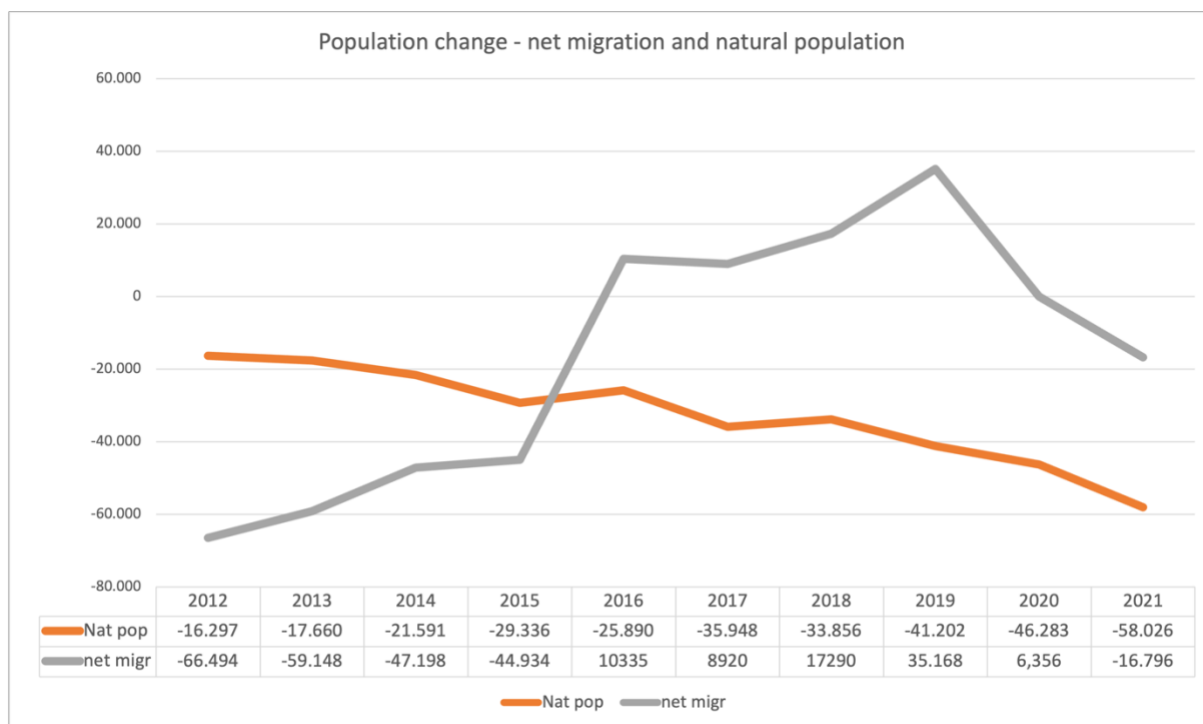
Year	Population
2012	-16.297
2013	-17.660
2014	-21.591
2015	-29.336
2016	-25.890
2017	-35.958
2018	-33.856
2019	-41.202
2020	-46.283
2021	-58.026

Source: Eurostat: [DEMO_GIND]

The following table shows the absolute numbers of net migration plus adjustment (immigrant minus emigrant+ statistical adjustment).

Year	Population
2012	-66.494
2013	-59.148
2014	-47.198
2015	-44.934
2016	10.335
2017	8920
2018	17.290
2019	35.168
2020	6.356
2021	-16.796

Source: Eurostat: [DEMO_GIND]



Source: Eurostat: [DEMO_GIND]

The net migration numbers are negative until 2015, rising from 2016 to 2019, when it started to decrease, a decrease that has determined also the negative peaks of the total population growth that we observed in the tables above.

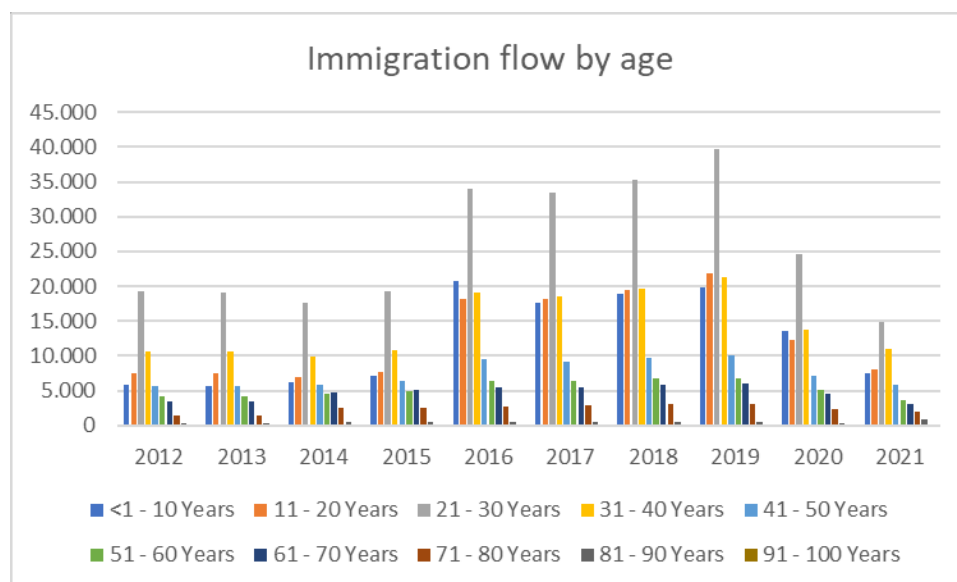
6. Immigration flow in the last 10 years

This part analyses the evolution of the immigration flow in Greece from 2012 to 2021.

As can be seen from the graphs, immigration to Greece increased significantly because of the conflicts in Syria from 2015 and in Afghanistan, Somalia and Palestine from 2020. These events have led to an increase in applications for residence for reasons related to fleeing conflict, persecution, terrorism and human rights violations. Immigration trends remained relatively constant from 2012 to 2015. The number of immigrants registered in Greece in 2015 was 64,446, and the number of residences permits issued in the same year was 37,464. A substantial change then occurred from 2016 onwards. The highest figure was recorded in 2019 with 129,459 registered immigrants and 42,348 residence permits issued.

6.1 Immigration flow by age

This histogram analyses immigration trends in Greece by age group. It shows that for each year analyzed, most immigrants are under the age of 30, with the largest proportion between the ages of 21 and 30. The highest recorded figure is in 2019 with 39,735 immigrants belonging to this age group. At the same time, however, the age group between 31 and 40 has gained relevance, in fact in 2015 there were 10,832 immigrants belonging to this age group, while in 2019 21,338.

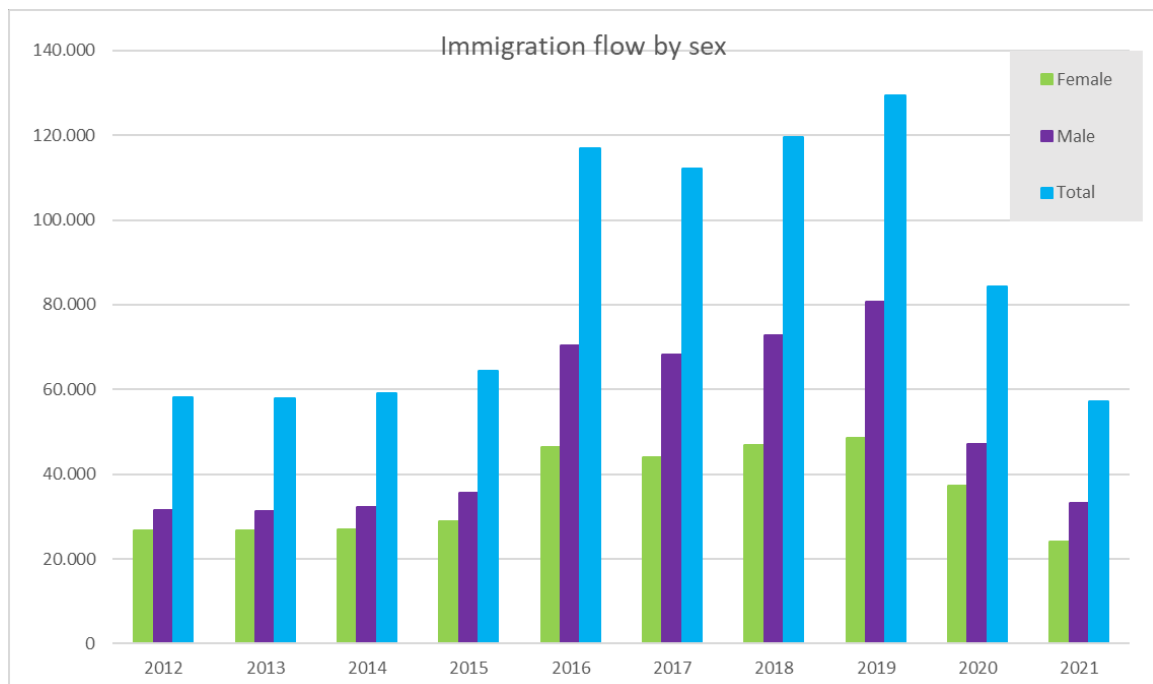


Source: Eurostat [MIGR_IMM8]

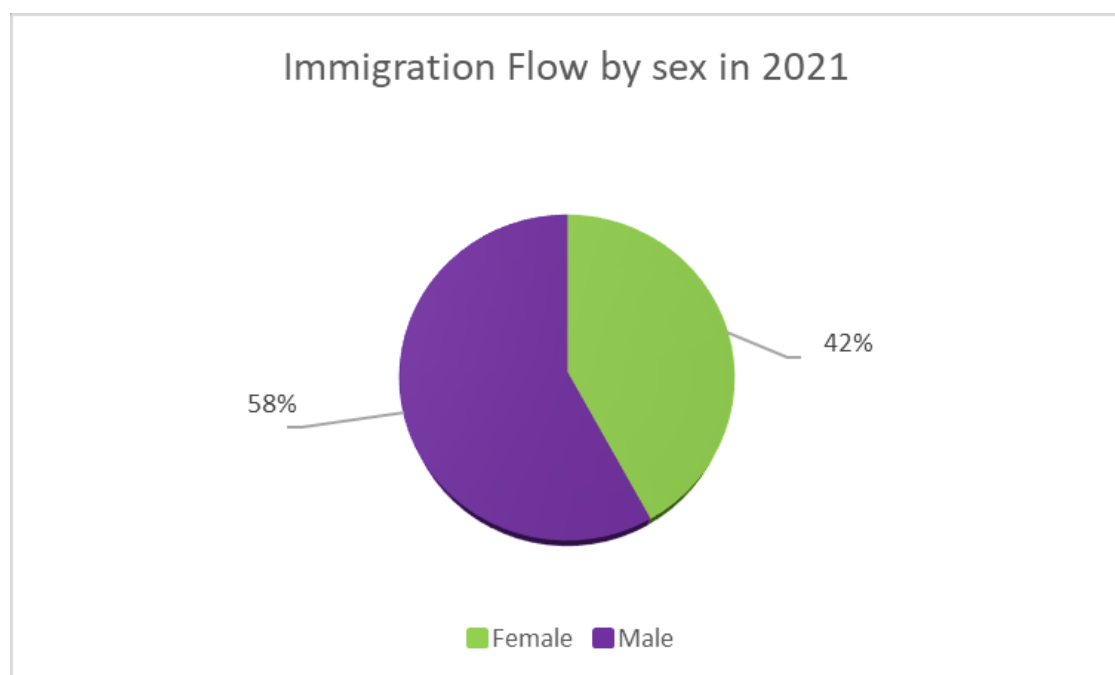
6.2 Immigration flow by sex

This graph shows the distinction of immigrants in Greece based on gender. It shows that the male presence is always higher than the female presence, with a linear gap between 2012

and 2015. In fact, in 2015 there were 5 per cent more men than women. This gap increased from 2016 until 2019, when there were 12% more men. This graph also shows an increase in female immigration from 2016 to 2019. From 2020 onwards, it then returned to similar levels as in 2015. In 2021, there were 23,999 registered women, 42% of the total.



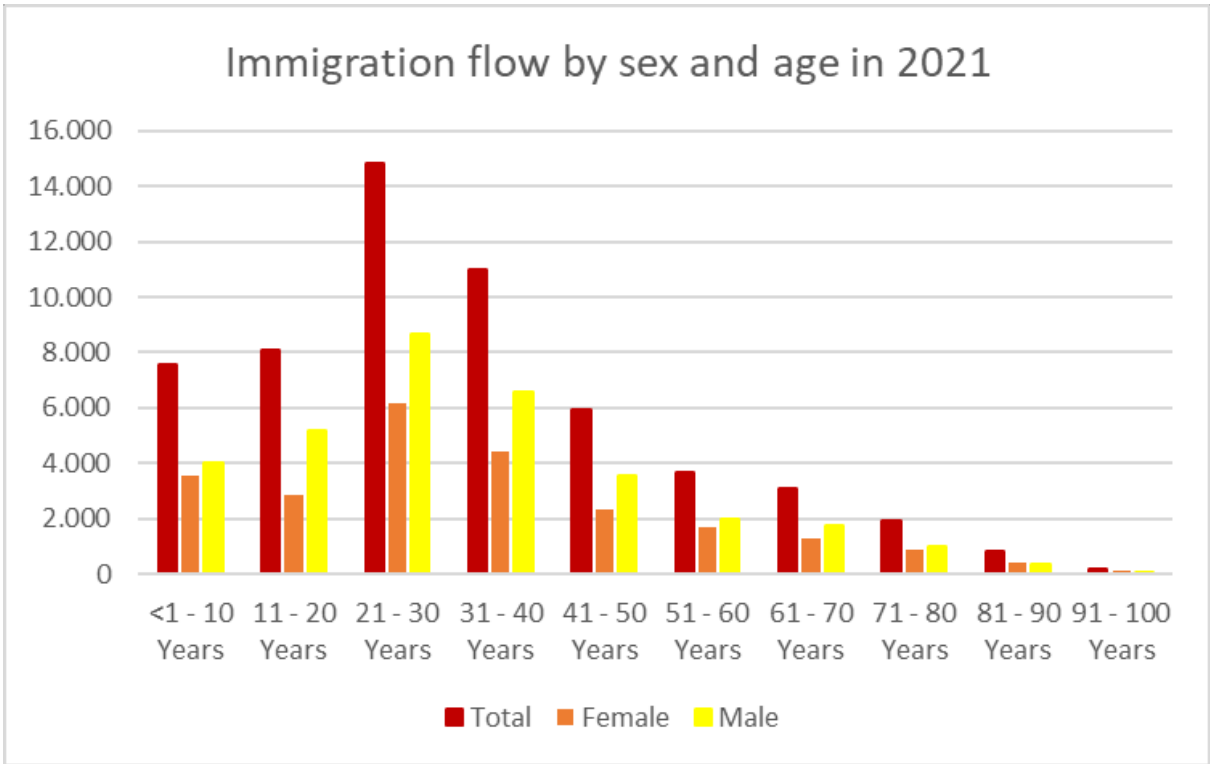
Source: Eurostat [MIGR_IMM8]



Source: Eurostat [MIGR_IMM8]

6.3 Immigration flow by age and sex

In 2021, there were 57,120 registered immigrants in Greece, of whom 23,999 were women (42 %) and 33,121 were men (58%). Men tend to be more in most age groups, with a focus on the under-30s. In contrast, there is a greater presence of women over the age of 80.

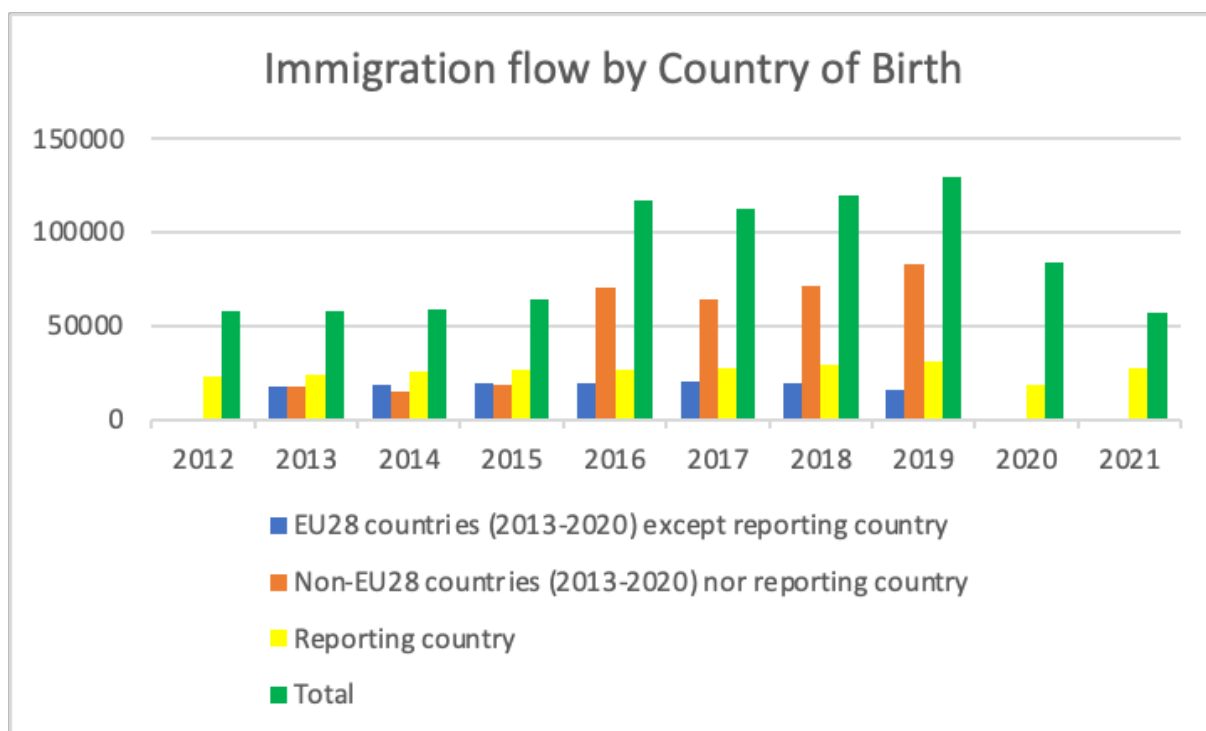


Source: Eurostat [MIGR_IMM8]

6.4 Immigration flow by country of birth

Between 2016 and 2019 immigrants from non-EU countries were the majority out of total immigrants in Greece. Specifically, in 2019, they accounted for 64% of the total.

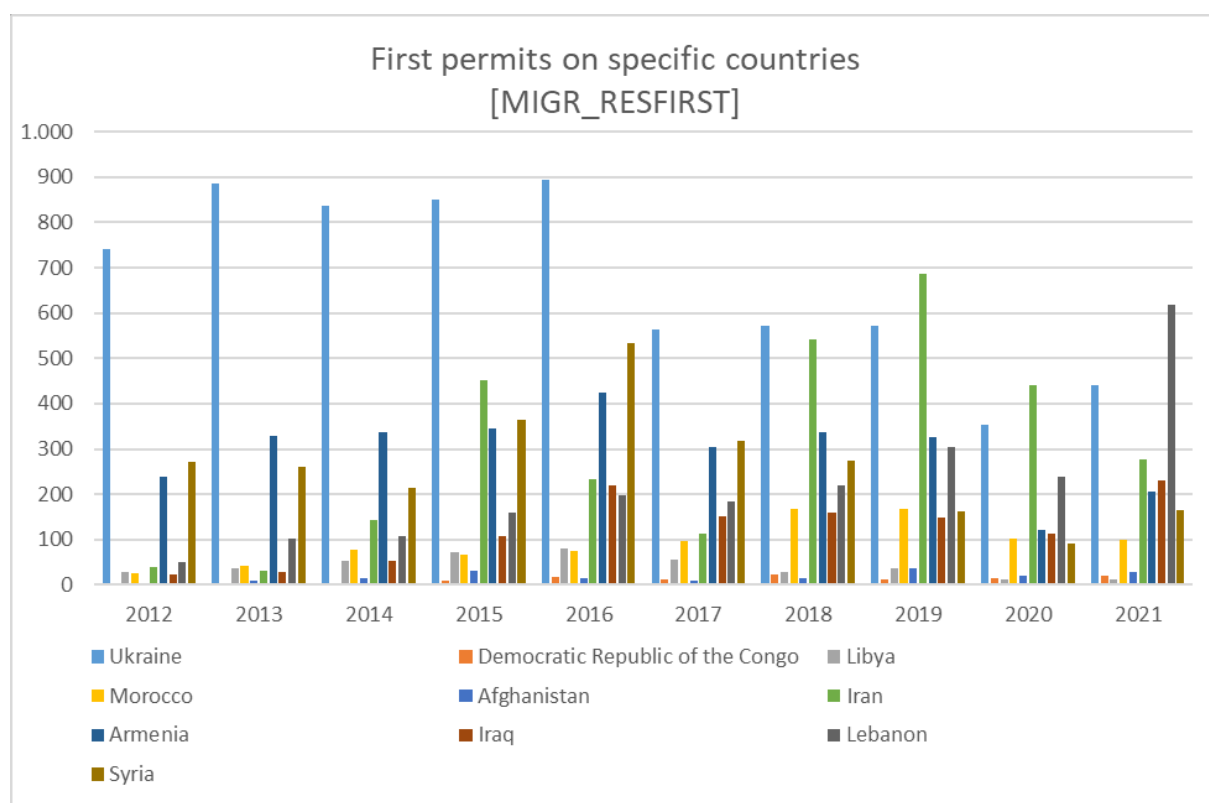
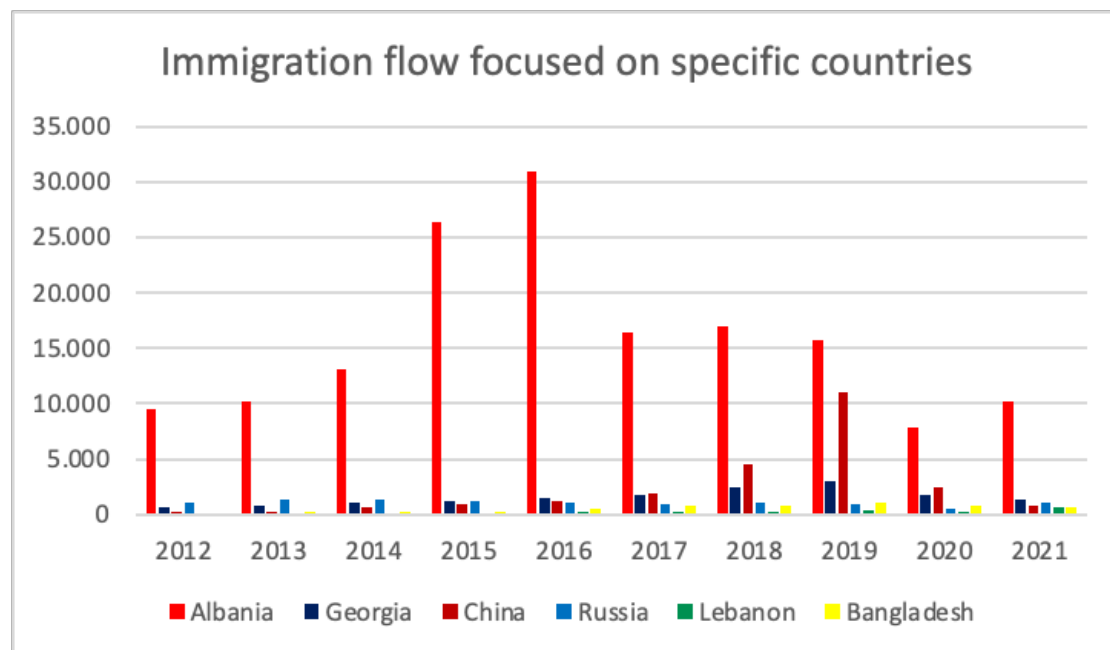
The last two years under consideration (2020-2021) have seen a considerable decrease in new arrivals: the difference between flow in 2019 and 2021 is 44%. This decrease is also due to the increase of the push-back practices at the Greek-Turkish border.



Source: Eurostat [MIGR_IMM3CTB]

6.5 Immigration flow focused on specific countries

Looking at specific countries of birth, we can see the strong predominance of Albanian citizenship, which accounted for 18% (10,201) of total immigrants (57,120) in 2021. Compared with Albanian immigrants, other countries of birth have negligible presences, but Chinese immigrants have increased considerably since 2017, peaking in 2019 (10,958). The number of immigrants from Syria, Ukraine, Lebanon and Iraq have also become more significant in recent years, even if they do not represent the majority.



6.6 Immigration flow considering the reasons of migration

Looking at the graph regarding the motivations of people who decide to migrate to Greece, the main motivation is family reunification. Economic and educational motivations continue to be a much smaller percentage than the main one.

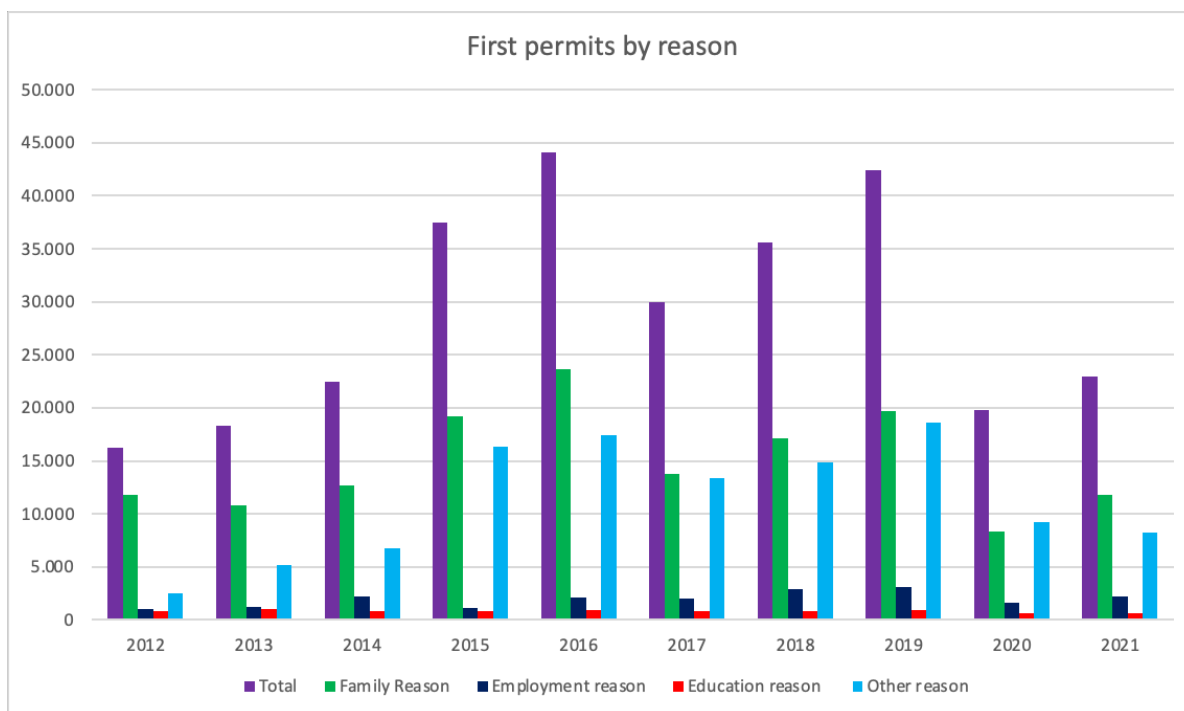
Along with family reasons, "other reasons" account for a large percentage in all years surveyed. These types of reasons for applying for residence permits include fleeing conflict, persecution, terrorism, and human rights violations.

The year in which the most residence permits were issued was 2016 (44,072), of which:

- family reason: 53% (23,598)
- employment reason: 5% (2,133)
- education reason: 2% (902)
- other reason: 40% (17,439)

In subsequent years, there has been a gradual decrease from 2016. In 2021, 52% (22,095) fewer permits were issued than in 2016 (44,072). The permits issued in 2021 are divided into:

- family reason: 51% (11,773)
- employment reason: 10% (2,193)
- education reason: 3% (681)
- other reason: 36% (8,258)

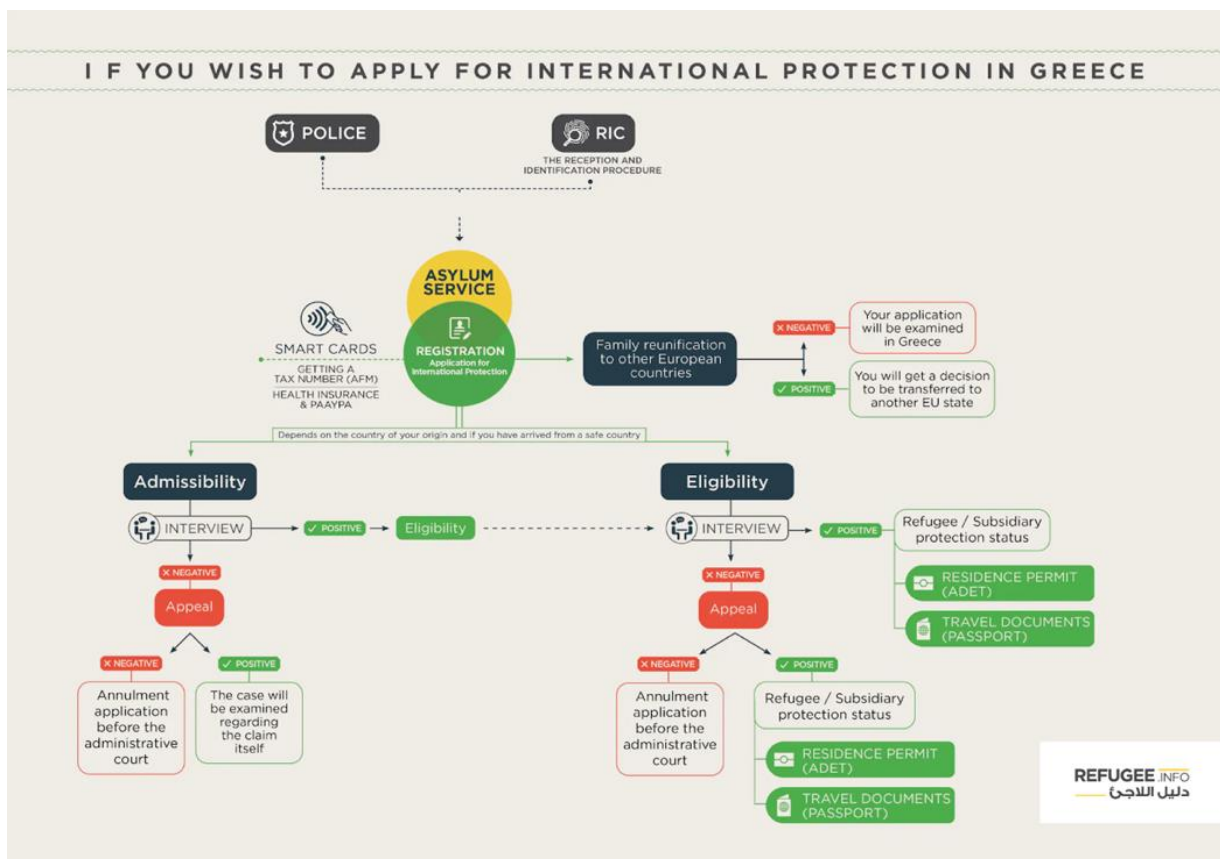


Source: Eurostat [MIGR_RESFIRST]

7. Asylum seekers

Before exposing the collected data about asylum seekers and refugees in Greece, we find it appropriate to briefly introduce the argument, since the Hellenic Republic represented a particular context in the refugee crisis of 2015 and still is a hot spot for its geographical proximity to the Middle East.

According to the International Rescue Committee, five years ago, people fleeing violence in the Middle East and South and Central Asia viewed Greece as an entry point to Europe. Today, Greece has become something like a holding pen for people seeking asylum, with thousands stuck in reception centers on the islands living in squalid conditions.



Source: <https://greece.refugee.info/en-us/articles/4984594750615>

Between 1998 and 2008 several regularization programs sought to address the presence of a growing number of people living in the country irregularly by facilitating the acquisition of residence/work permits for undocumented migrants. The Greek government, under Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, places emphasis on border security, with the reinforcement of the border fence along the land border with Turkey in the Evros region and strengthened border patrols both after the February 2020 Evros incident (when thousands of migrants were encouraged to attempt to cross the Greek land border from Turkey) and the return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan in August of 2021. Persistent issues since 2020 remain:

- the alleged pushbacks at the Greek-Turkish borders;
- poor reception conditions (especially on the Greek islands in the Aegean);
- an insufficient framework of assistance for asylum seekers and recognized refugees;
- an insufficient education for asylum-seeking minors and young adults;
- the absence of a comprehensive integration plan.

Mary Lawlor, a UN Special Rapporteur for the defenders on human rights, expressed a sincere warning about the situation after a visit to the country in June 2022. “The Government's current approach to the issue is defined by its framing of migration as a matter of **security and prevention**,” Lawlor said. “What this has fostered for refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and the human rights defenders acting in solidarity with them, is an atmosphere of fear – particularly a fear of criminalization.”

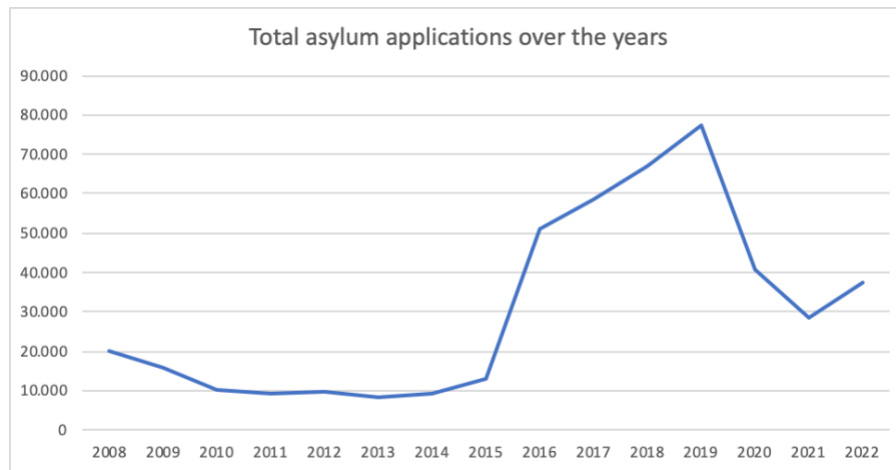
Refugees and asylum seekers

We would like to further specify the terms "refugee" and "asylum seeker" for a better understanding of the current paragraph.

According to the International Red Cross, an **asylum seeker** is a person looking for protection because they fear persecution, or they have experienced violence or human rights violations. A **refugee** is a person who asked for protection and was given refugee status. The latter is given to “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion” (UNHCR). Not every asylum seeker becomes a refugee, but every refugee starts out as an asylum seeker.

7.1 Total number of asylum seekers

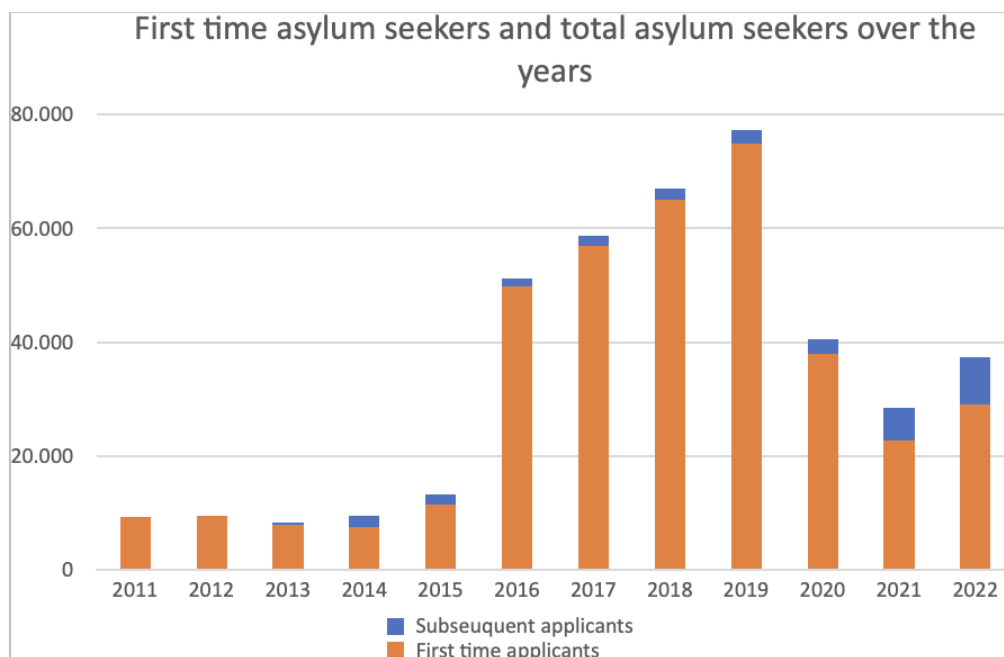
Our analysis can now be deepened by looking at the collected data. In the following paragraphs we are going to present the figures of the past and current situation of asylum seekers in Greece. We will first look at the total number of asylum seekers in the country over the years; we will then move to the age and gender breakdown of the data. The last part of this section will take into account the differences between asylum seekers and refugees, with a brief in-depth analysis of unaccompanied minors.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

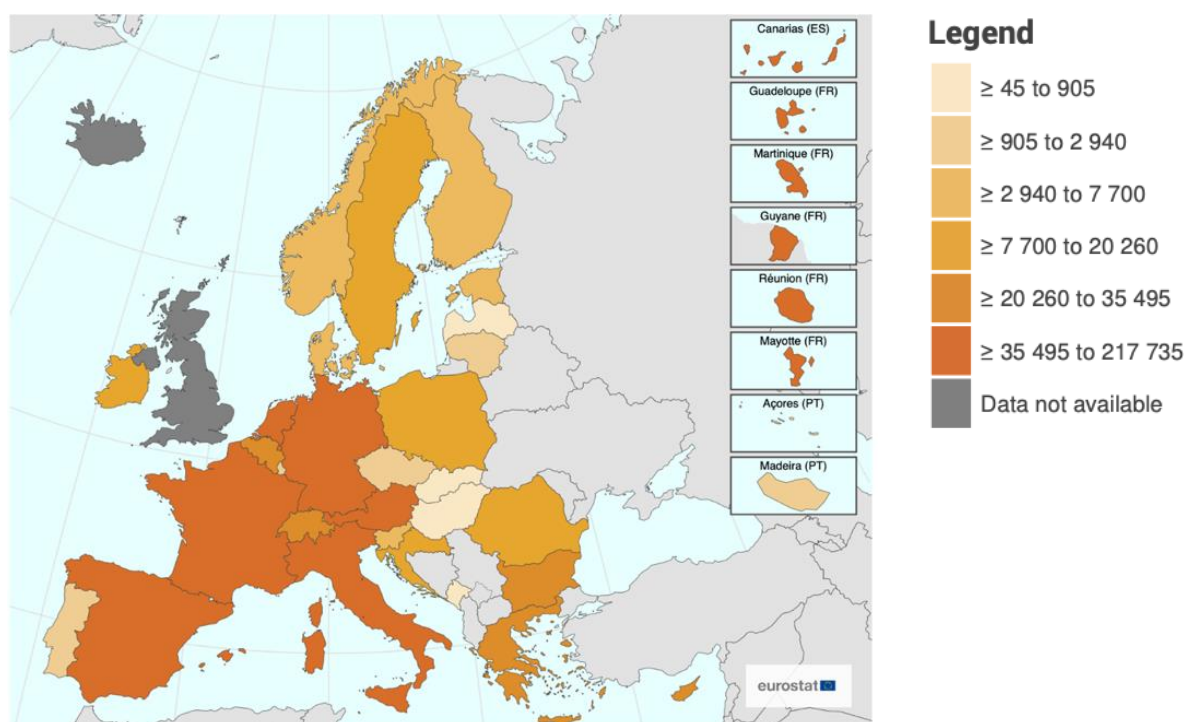
This first graph gives us an overview of the total number of asylum applications received by Greece over the last years, from 2008 to 2022. We can observe a sharp increase during the years 2015 and 2016 due to the breakdown of order in the near Middle East countries and the resulting refugee crisis. The peak has been reached in 2019, with more than 70.000 asylum applications.

After 2019, we can note a dramatic decrease that can be attributed mainly to the Coronavirus pandemic but also to a new restrictive tendency of the migration and asylum policy following the 2019 elections. Indeed, the new government re-amended the national asylum legislation (L. 4636/2019) and strengthened border control measures. In order to specify further what these applications represent, we will now see which of them have been presented by first time applicants and which of them are subsequent applications.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

We can see that the most part of the applications are represented by first time applicants, which means that, especially during the refugee crisis, the increase in asylum applications was representative of the growing flow of arrivals.

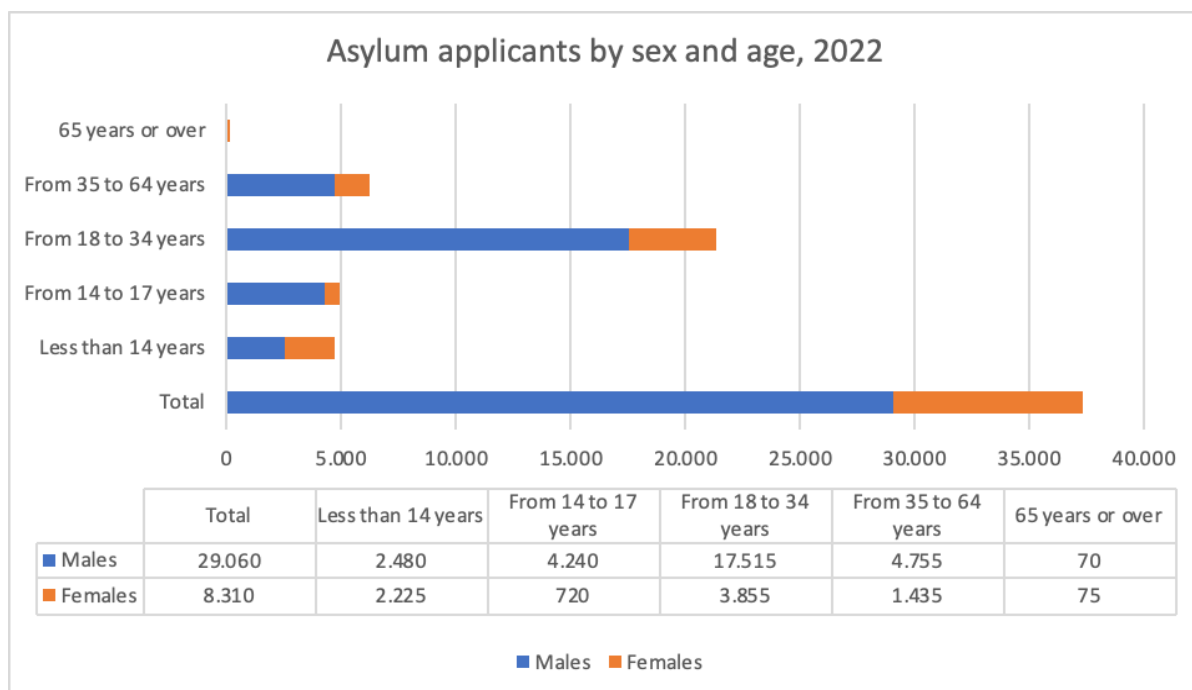


Extra-EU27 first time applicants in 2022; *Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]*

We decided here to compare the first-time applicants recorded by Greece to those of other European countries. Regarding 2022 arrivals, Greece places itself in the fifth position (with 29.125 first time applicants), overpassed by Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands.

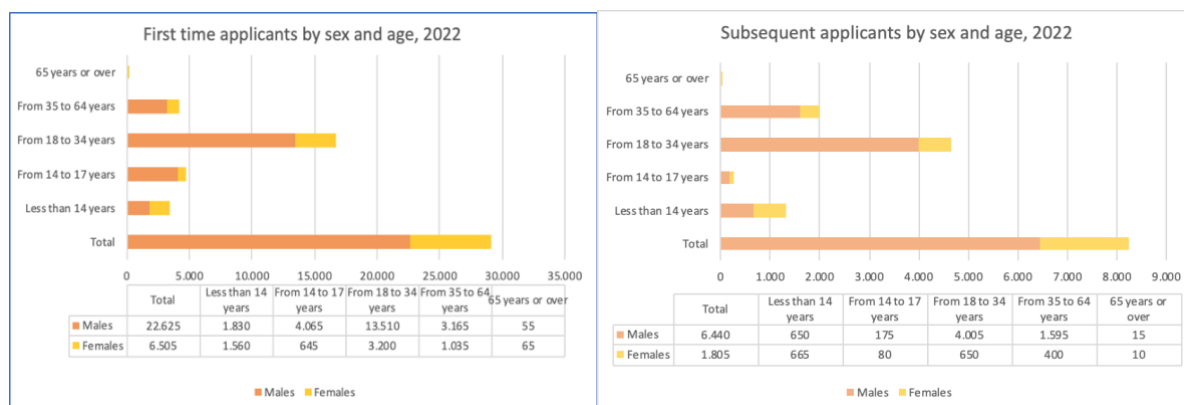
7.2 Asylum seekers by sex, age and citizenship

Looking more deeply at the composition of applicants in Greece, in the graph below we can see the distribution of asylum seekers by age and sex in 2022. Essentially, we can observe that the "18 to 34 years old" group is the biggest one, accounting for more than a half of total applicants. Regarding the gender breakdown, males are the majority in almost all the age groups analysed and represent 77,7% of total asylum seekers. Interestingly, the sex gap almost disappears in the youngest ones: among children under 14 years old, males and females are almost the same.



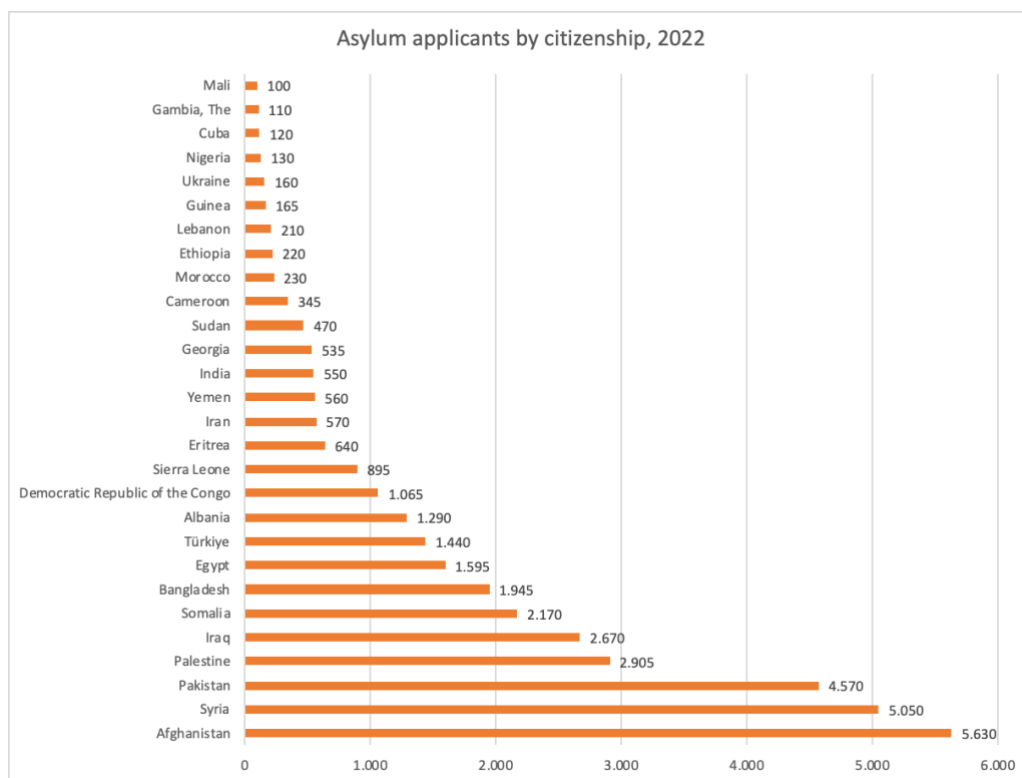
Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

The total number of asylum seekers can be further analyzed considering the first-time applicants and the subsequent ones. The following graphs show the distribution of those groups according to sex and age.



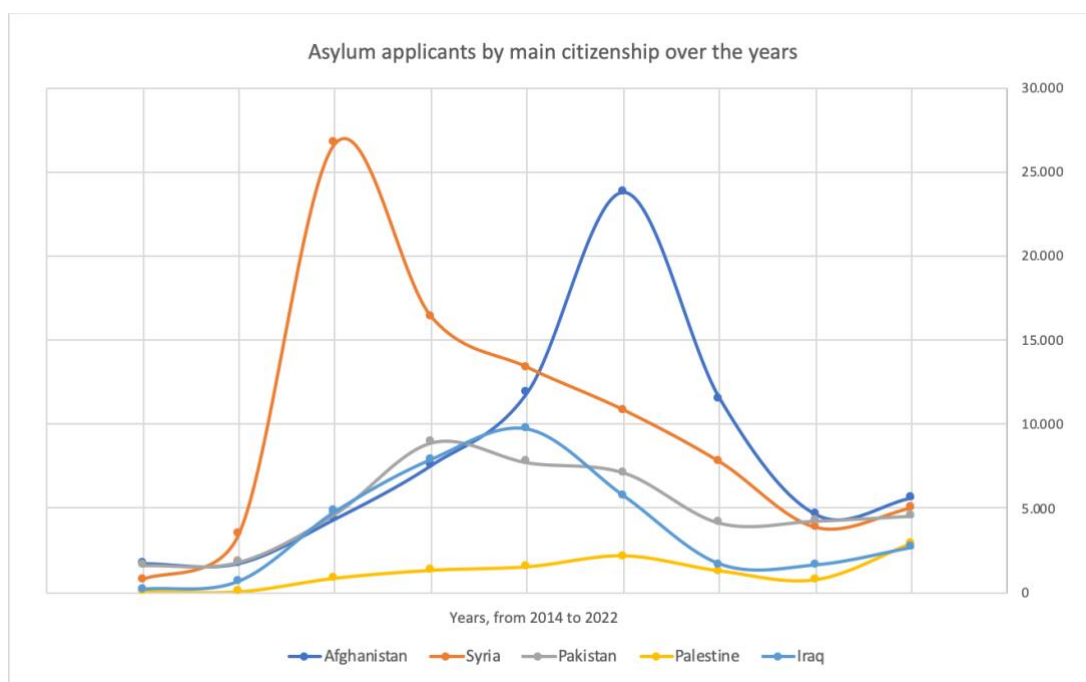
Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

Regarding the citizenship of those applying for protection, in 2022 the most represented country was Afghanistan, with 5.630 requests, accounting for 15,06% of total applicants, soon followed by Syria (13,5%) and Pakistan (12,2%). All third countries with more than 100 applicants are shown in the graph below.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

The main nationalities changed consistently over the years, accordingly with the evolution of the humanitarian crisis in the neighboring countries. 2016 registered a peak in the applications by Syrian citizens, who had been overcome by Afghans since 2019 onwards.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]

7.3 Unaccompanied minors

According to the European Union's definition, an unaccompanied minor is *"A minor who arrives on the territory of an EU Member unaccompanied by the adult responsible for them by law or by the practice of the EU Member State concerned, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person or who is left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the EU Member State"*. The unaccompanied minors asking for asylum in Greece in 2022 were 2.865, with a 26% increase compared to the previous year. Most of them came from Somalia, followed by Afghanistan and Pakistan.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYUMACTA]

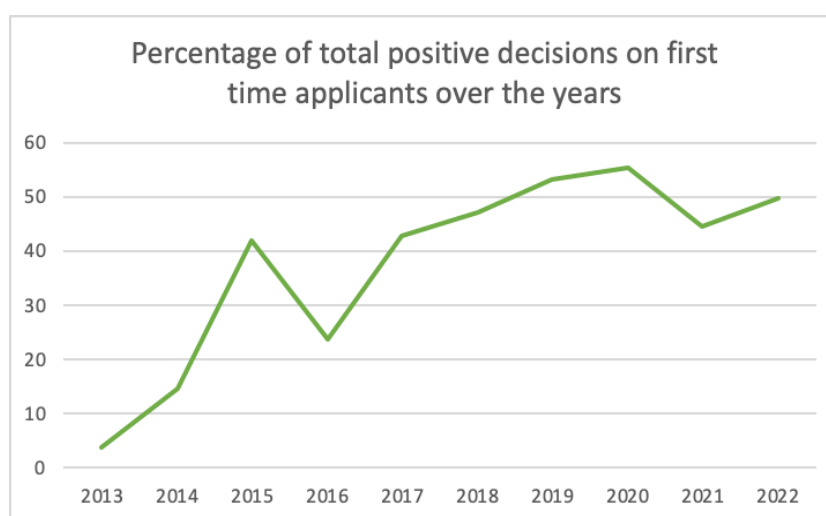
8. Share of refugees on total migration

As mentioned above, not every asylum seeker eventually becomes a refugee. The requirements to be granted refugee status are strict and were first regulated by the UNHCR-supported 1951 Geneva Convention, that was based on the principle of non-refoulement. Because of these requirements, only some applicants get refugee status. According to Eurostat, in 2022, Greece granted the "Geneva Convention status" to 34,57% of asylum applicants, while a total 37,49% of requests were accepted, partly under different types of protection. In fact, although refugee status still exists today, other types of protection were created, such as the "humanitarian protection" or the "subsidiary protection". Below are the tables showing the outcomes of the evaluation process of asylum applications in 2022.

Year: 2022	First instance decisions	Final decisions in appeal or review
Geneva Convention status	18.730	730
Humanitarian status	0	0
Subsidiary protection status	515	1.130
Total positive decisions	19.245	1.860
Rejected	19.405	15.780
Total	38.645	17.640

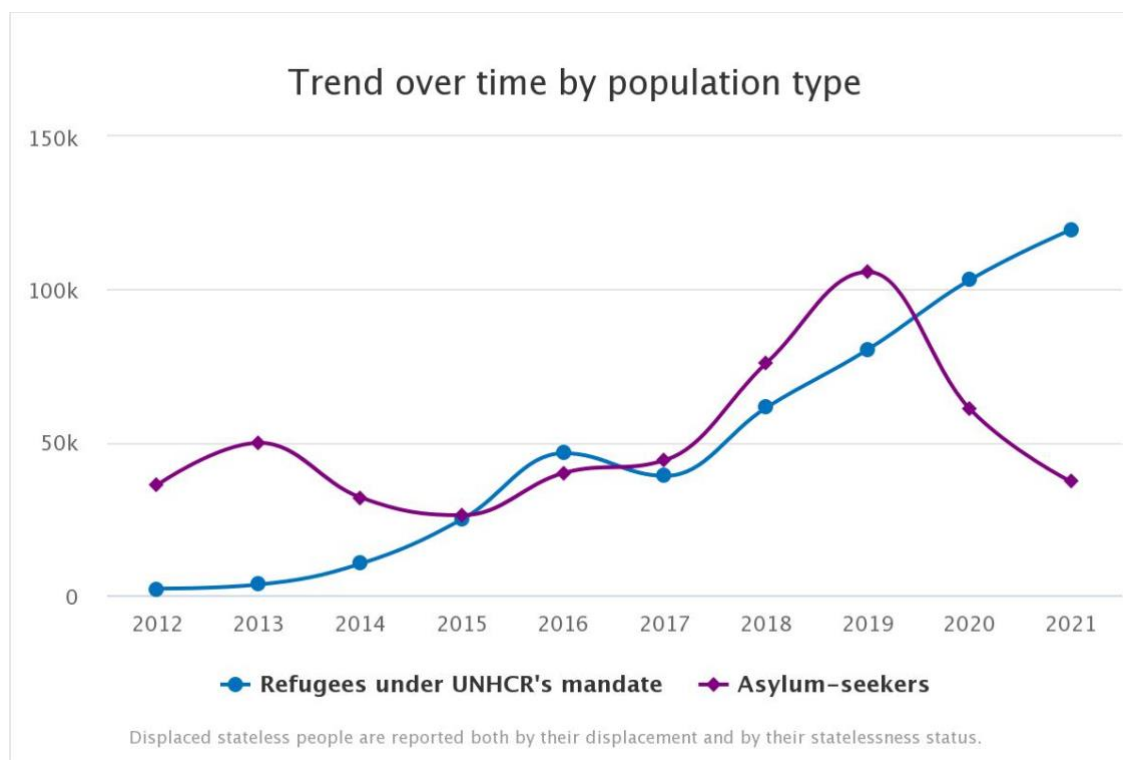
Sources Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYDCFSTA], [MIGR_ASYDCFINA]

Considering the total positive outcomes regarding first instance decisions, the rate of acceptance over the years is synthetised in the graph below. As we can see, it has considerably risen in the past 9 years, despite a fall in 2016 and a minor one in 2021.



Source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYDCFSTA]

As regards with the stock of refugees currently present in Greece, UNHCR provides more specific data, saying that in 2021 the refugees under its mandate in the country were 119.650. The trend can be seen in the graph: despite a slight decrease in 2017, the figures constantly grew from 2012 on.



Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=81XYdU>

Refugees get much attention from the media and the public opinion. The debate on migrations is very often focused on those asking for asylum and those obtaining refugee status. However, the data collected by Eurostat clearly show that refugees are only a small part of the total migration phenomenon.

Considering the stock, the share of refugees on the total population born abroad (1.361.720 in 2021, source Eurostat: [MIGR_POP3CTB]), stops at 8,78%. This number slightly increases if people with foreign citizenship are taken into consideration. They were 921.485 in 2021 (source Eurostat: [MIGR_POP3CTB]), so the refugees under UNHCR mandate accounted for 12,98%.

If we consider the flow of immigrants entering Greece, the percentage of asylum seekers on total immigrants was 39,67% in 2021. The first-time asylum applicants were, in fact, 22.660 (source Eurostat: [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZA]), while a total 57.120 immigrated in the country (source Eurostat: MIGR_IMM8). This percentage is considerably higher than the previous ones, mainly because only a part of these applicants will eventually become a refugee.

9. Migrants' integration based on indicators of employment or unemployment

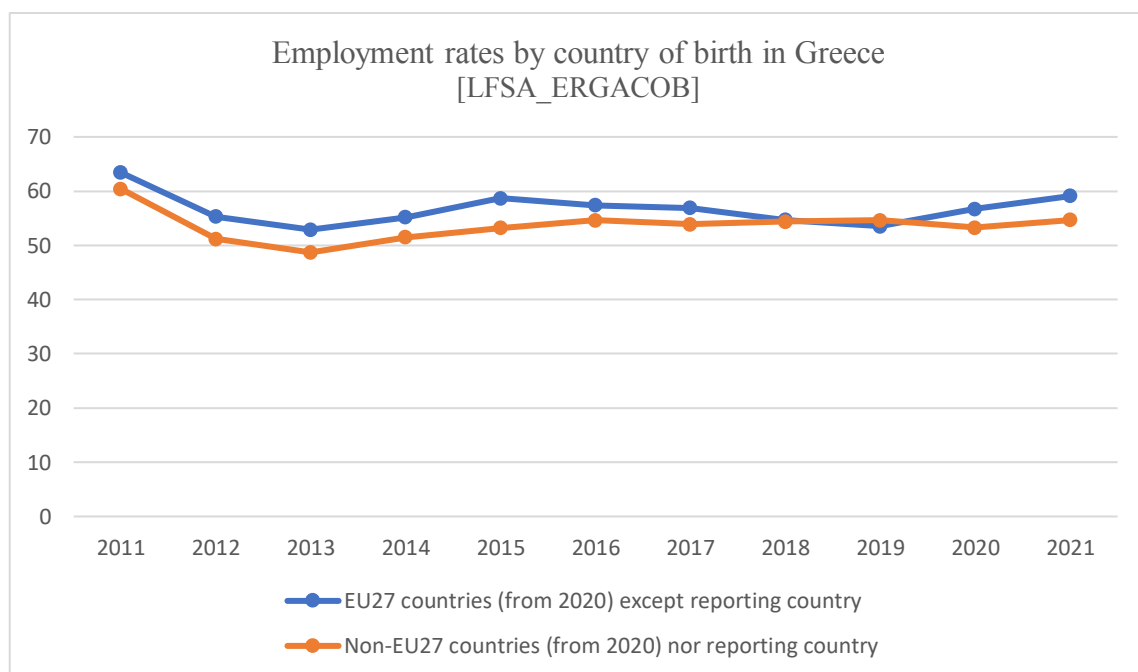
The employment and unemployment indicators inside the labor market are relevant pointers to understand migrants' integration.

According to the table below, the employment rate in Greece of the total residents between 20 to 64 years has been experiencing a fluctuating increase. This rising stopped in 2020 due to the pandemic but, in 2021 the rate has started to grow again until 2022, + 8% point compared to 2020. On the contrary, unemployment has been decreasing since 2013, as shown by the second table.

Year	Rate of employment (%)
2013	52,50
2014	53,10
2015	54,80
2016	55,90
2017	57,40
2018	59,00
2019	60,80
2020	58,30
2021	62,60
2022	66,30

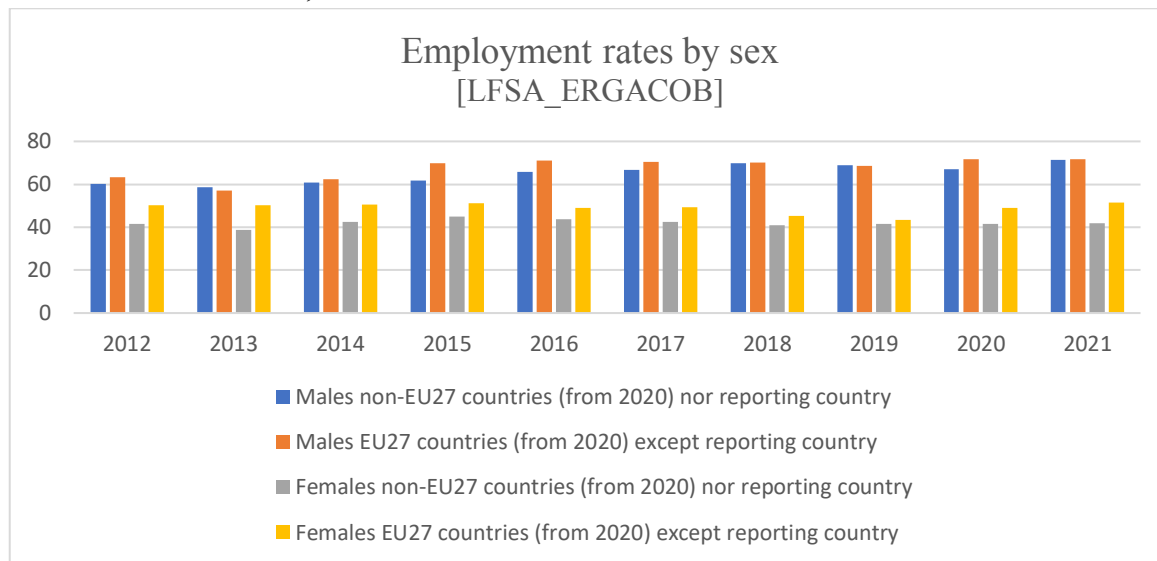
Year	Rate of unemployment (%)
2013	16,4
2014	15,7
2015	14,8
2016	14,2
2017	13,0
2018	11,7
2019	10,7
2020	10,0
2021	8,6
2022	7,5

Source: Eurostat: [LFSI_EMP_A], [UNE_RT_A]

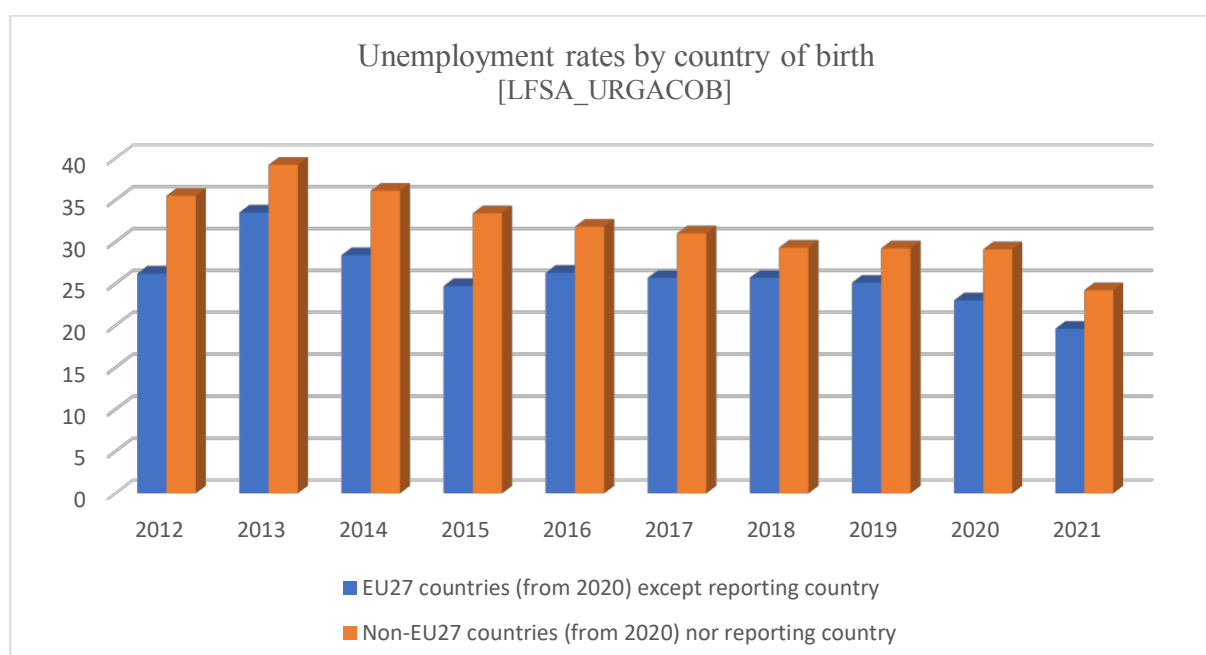


This graph shows the level of employment in Greece considering the country of origin of immigrants. Those who come from countries outside the European Union have a lower level of employment than those who come instead from a country within the European Union,

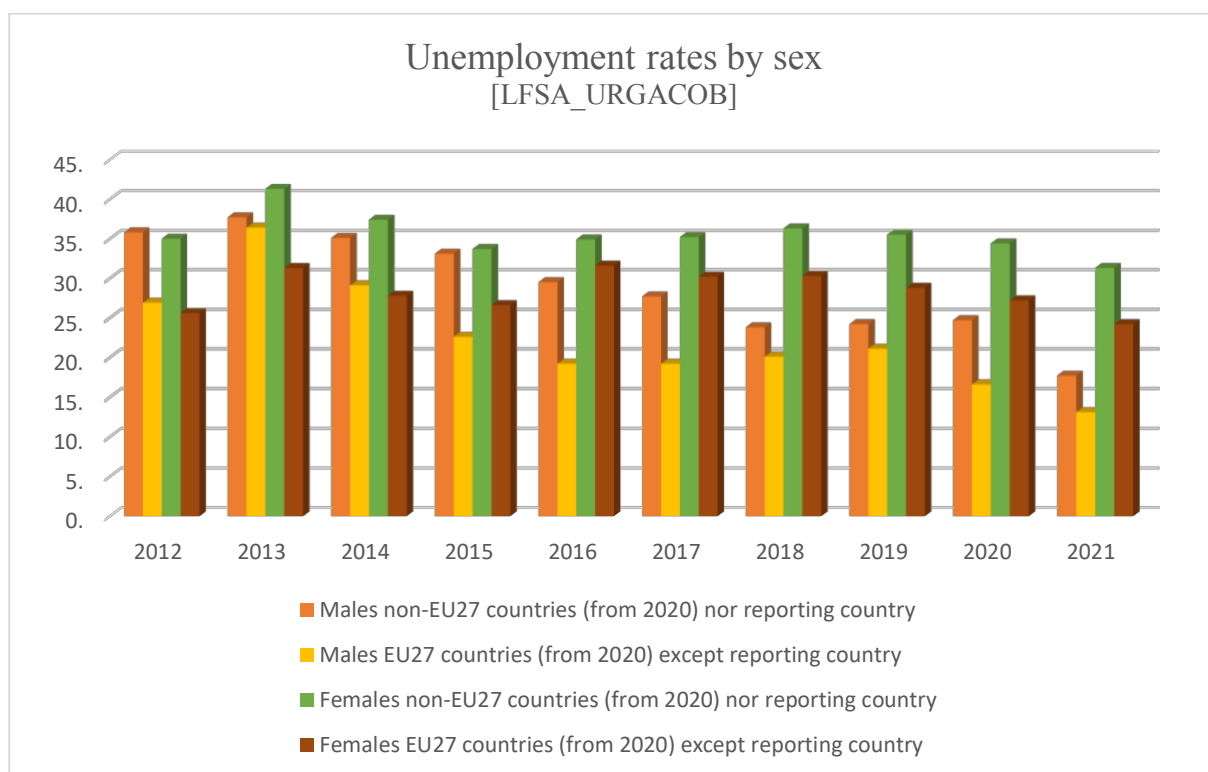
at least until 2018. This difference can be explained if we consider that there are more migrants who come from countries outside the union. Nevertheless, the difference decreased after 2018 when the two values reach a similar employment rate. In 2021 the employment for migrants coming within the European Union was 59,1% while for those coming from non-EU countries the rate was 54,7%.



In line with the previous graph here we have a division of migrants' employment divided by sex. Both for migrants coming from non-EU countries and EU countries males have a higher employment rate than women.



Looking instead to Unemployment the situation is completely reversed. People coming from non-EU countries present a major difference than those coming from EU countries. In 2014 we have the highest difference with 28,4% for people coming from EU countries and 36,1% for migrants coming from non-EU countries. In 2021, the most recent data, the difference is 19,6% for EU countries and 24,2% for non-EU ones.



Regarding the level of unemployment broken down by sex categories, we have two different trends. Females and males from EU countries have a lower level of unemployment, with a higher value for females. In contrast, people from non-EU countries have a more diverse and peculiar trend. Females are in general more unemployed than men with a value of 31,3% in 2021, for men the unemployment rate was 17,7%.

10. Conclusion

The present report analyzed different dimensions of the migration phenomenon in Greece in the last years, with a specific focus on the most recent data available.

Like many other European countries, Greek native population is facing a decline in numbers and an overall ageing, with negative peaks in 2015, 2017 and 2021.

Placed in a strategic position for migrations from the Middle East toward Europe, Greece has always been affected by migrations. In 2021, the stock of migrants numbered 1.361.720 people, the majority of which were females. Considering the migrants' citizenship, Albania is the main country of origin. After several restrictions posed by the Greek government on the channels of entrance, family reasons account for 70% of the total requests. These peaks overlap with net migration data, and so it confirms that migration has buffered the population decrease.

The flow of migrants entering Greece was constant until 2015, after which an increase can be registered, with a peak of 129.459 migrants registered in 2019. They are mainly males aged between 21 and 30 and the first country of origin is Albania.

Despite being the focus of media attention for the refugee's crisis in 2015, the number of asylum seekers peaked in 2019 with more than 75.000 applications. With the pandemic and the relative restrictive policies, there has been a sharp decrease in asylum seekers and, in 2022, Greece received 37.375 applications, below the EU average. In 2021, refugees were 12,8% of total migrants.

As regards integration, migrants from non-EU countries have a higher level of employment than European ones. This has fostered the negative representation of migrants, depicted as the cause for the decrease in job opportunities suffered by the native population, an image widely used by anti-immigrants parties, that gathered considerable success in the country.

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