

## CONTEXT

In the month of March 2016, 27,000 people made the journey across the Mediterranean to Greece bringing the total of arrivals in the first three months of the year to 151,400. In 2015, there were 856,000 sea arrivals. UNHCR initiated a data collection and analysis exercise with support from the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) in order to better inform the wider community on the profile of refugees arriving to Greece, and improve immediate response and longer term planning.

The exercise focused on Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan arrivals, and this factsheet illustrates the results of interviews with SYRIANS during March 2016.

## METHODOLOGY

The profiling exercise was implemented on the islands that are receiving the majority of the arrivals to Greece: Chios, Lesbos, Samos and Leros. The survey was administered in locations on each island where all arrivals pass. The survey was not administered while individuals waited in line (e.g., for registration), or in closed facilities and children and persons with mental disabilities were interviewed in the presence of a caretaker.

A systematic purposive sampling was utilized and the enumerators interviewed respondents at regular intervals. The methodology was designed using the individual as unit of analysis. The purpose of the methodology is to provide a representative sample over the period of one month. Data by Greek authorities on age and gender breakdown of the Syrians populations arriving during the same period on the islands were used to apply weights to the data collected, to ensure a representation of each age and gender group based on the actual distribution of arrivals.

The methodology was tested and closely monitored throughout the data collection period. Four teams of Arabic speaking enumerators based in Chios, Leros, Lesbos and Samos interviewed 524 Syrians in March. The March results illustrated in this factsheet are representative of the Syrian population arriving to Greece in March.

This exercise started in January 2016 and was repeated for three months: the analysis at the end of each month give a profile of the arrivals from the main nationalities.

## LIMITATIONS

Operational constraints were significant: time for conducting a survey is limited, tensions may be high, some locations had to be left out due to lack of access, etc.

Many of the individuals staying overnight in hotels as well as unaccompanied children might not have been reached. The methodology attempted to factor in these challenges as much as possible. These challenges must be considered when reading the profiling results.

## KEY FINDINGS

94% of Syrian interviewed were internally displaced in Syria before starting the journey and 94% left Syria due to the conflict and violence.

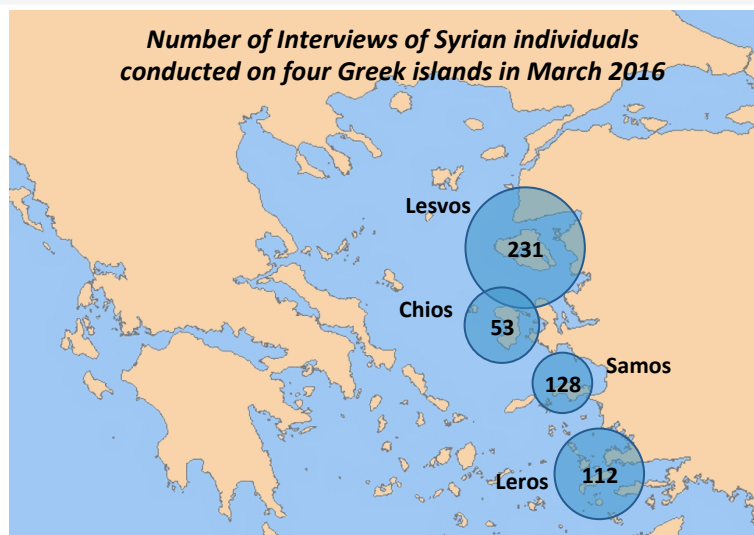
75% of those interviewed started left Syria in 2016, and for those moving directly from Syria to Greece the duration of the journey was 37 days on average.

The majority of those interviewed (80%) came directly from Syria and 80% traveled with at least a family member.

43% mentioned family reunification as one of the main reasons for choosing a destination country.

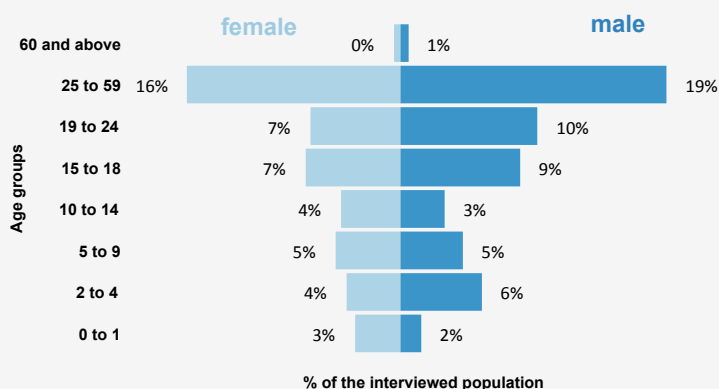
Only 17% of the interviewees said they stayed in another country (not Syria) for 6 months or more before starting their journey to Greece and most mentioned lack of adequate jobs, not meeting basic living expenses and to avoid exploitation as a main reason for leaving that country.

46% of respondents directly witnessed or experienced protection incidents during the journey.

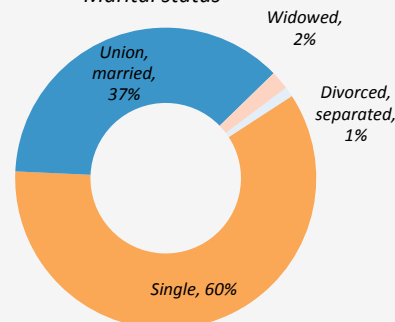


## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

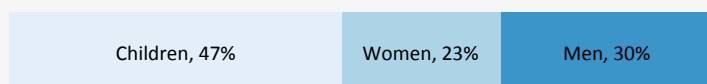
Age and Gender breakdown of interviewed Syrians



Marital status



Age and Gender distribution of interviewed Syrians



Special needs

2% of women interviewed are pregnant  
2% of women interviewed are lactating

2% have a physical disability  
1% have a severe medical condition

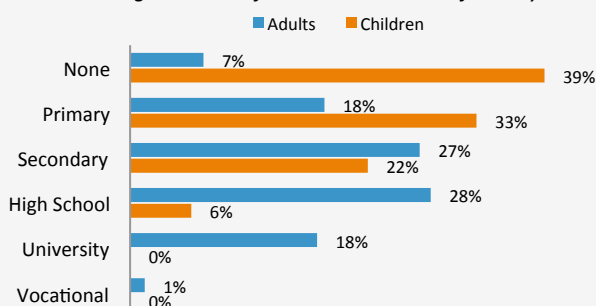
For a global overview of the age/gender breakdown of the arrivals, go to:  
from: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

### Education

**25%** of all respondents are students, 79% of whom have interrupted their education to take this journey

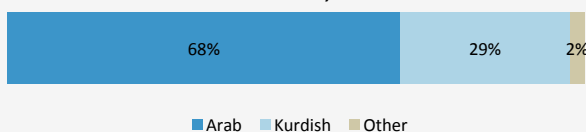
Most frequent levels of education interrupted are **PRIMARY**, **HIGH SCHOOL** and **UNIVERSITY**.

Highest level of education achieved for > 4 yr-old

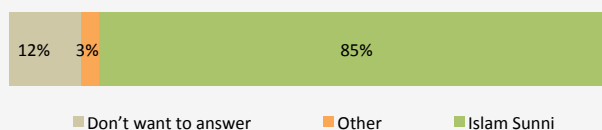


### Religion & Ethnicity

Ethnicity

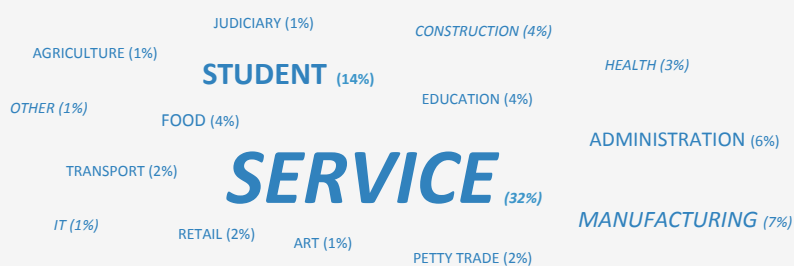


Religion



### Professional background

What was your **main occupation** back in your country of origin?\*



\* only for 18 years old and above

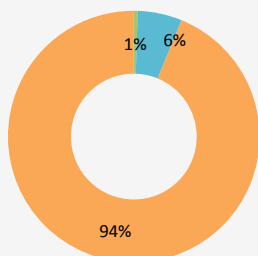
**17%** of adult respondents did not have professional activities back in the country of origin. Of those, 75% are WOMEN and 25% are MEN.

**28%** of all women and **8%** of all men indicated no professional/education activities before leaving their place of residence.

## INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

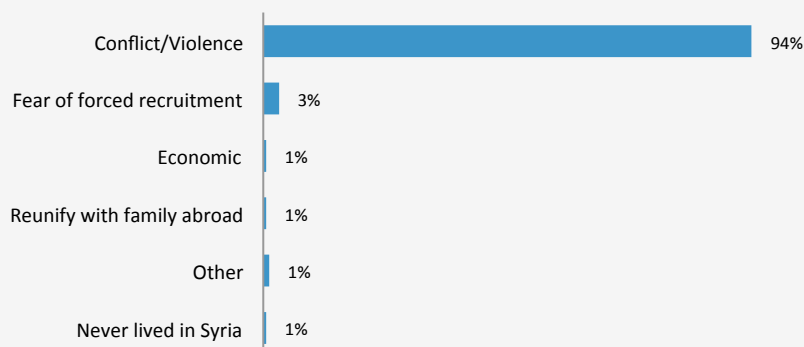
*Internally displaced due to violence/conflict in Syria before journey*

■ I never lived in my country ■ No ■ Yes



## REASONS TO LEAVE SYRIA

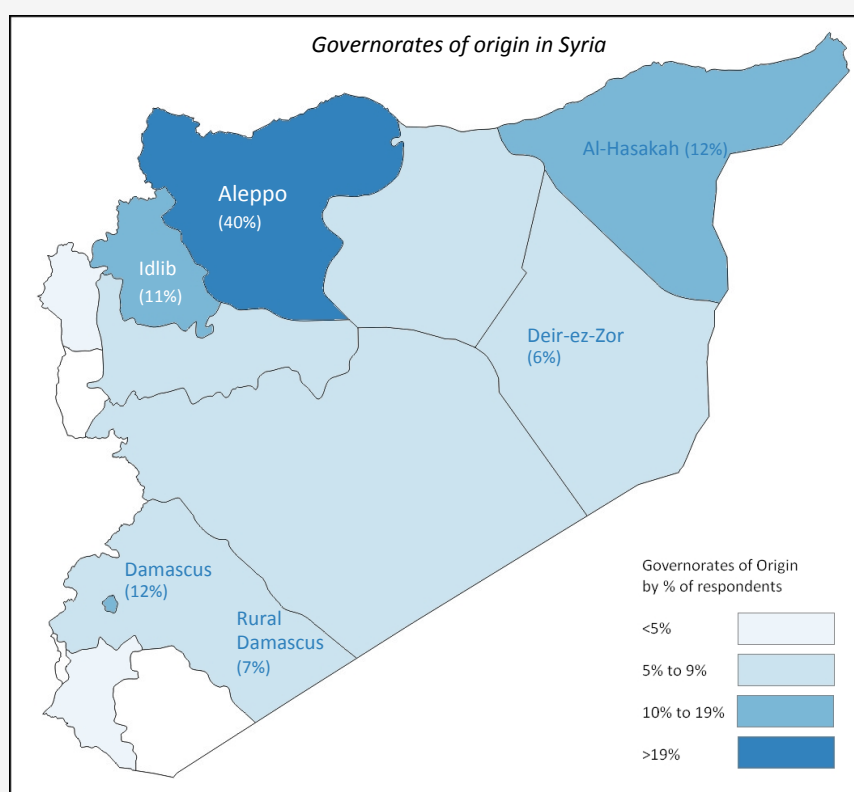
*Main reason to leave the country of origin*



## JOURNEY

**37 days** Average duration of travel for those moving directly from Syria to Greece

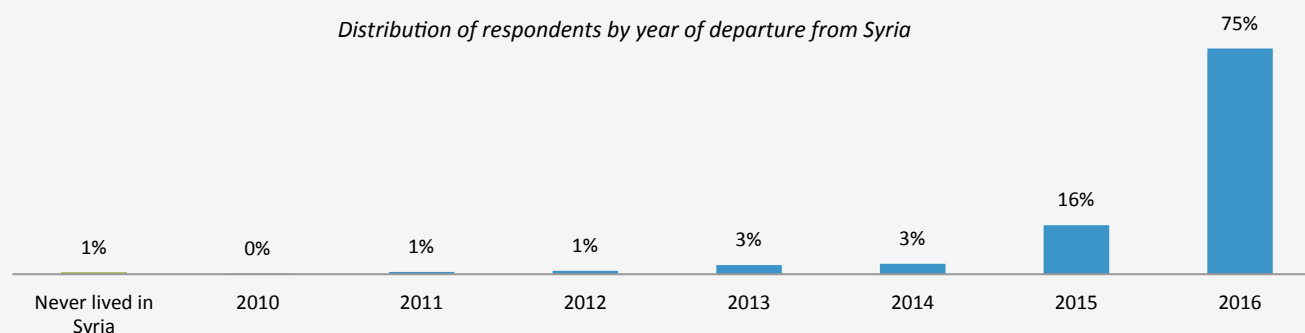
*Distribution by time spent en route*



**75%** of all respondents left Syria in **2016**

**16%** of all respondents left Syria in **2015**

*Distribution of respondents by year of departure from Syria*



## ROUTES

### Four main routes taken by Syrians to reach to Greece:

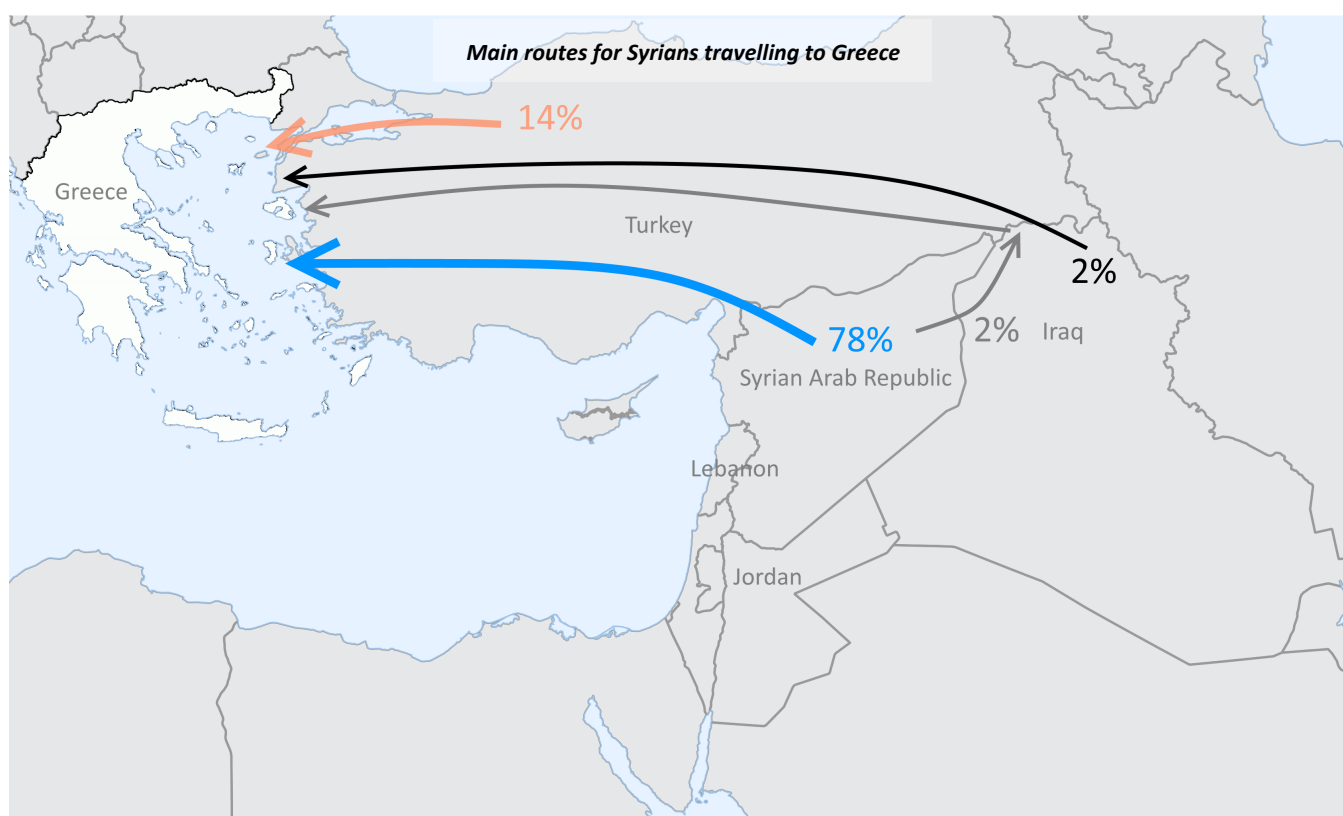
- 78%** - SYRIA > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians coming directly from Syria).
- 14%** - TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians previously living in Turkey).
- 2%** - SYRIA > IRAQ > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians coming directly from Syria).
- 2%** - IRAQ > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians previously living in Iraq).
- (<4% other minor routes).

**15%** of respondents indicated that they had made previous attempt(s) to cross the border between Turkey and Greece.

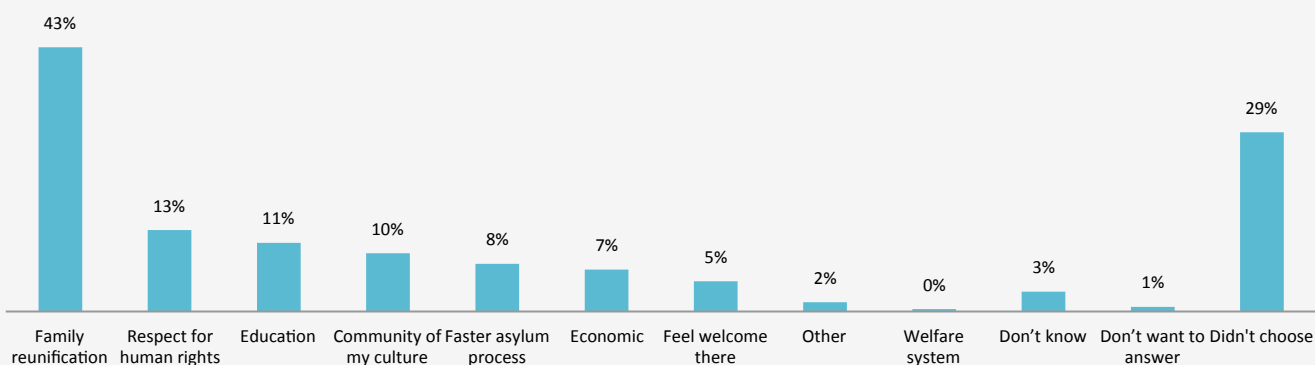
## FINANCE

### Main ways to finance the journey

Borrowing from friends	40%
Family paid for the journey	26%
Sold assets	20%
Own savings	12%
Worked during the journey	1%
Don't know	0%
Borrowing from other entities	0%
Don't want to answer	1%



## REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE DESTINATION COUNTRIES



\* in % of respondents. Respondents could provide multiple answer, hence total of all answers can be above 100%

## COUNTRY WHERE PEOPLE STAYED FOR 6 MONTHS OR MORE - OUTSIDE SYRIA

**17%** lived in another country (not Syria) for 6 months or more before starting the journey to Europe. Average stay in the country of residence was of two years.

### Main countries where people stayed for 6 months or more outside of Syria

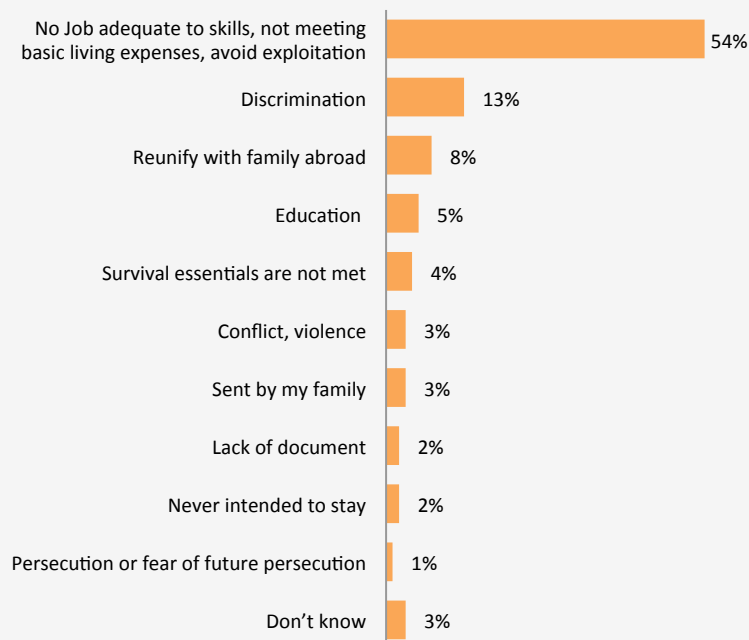
**TURKEY** (14% of all respondents)

**IRAQ** (2%)

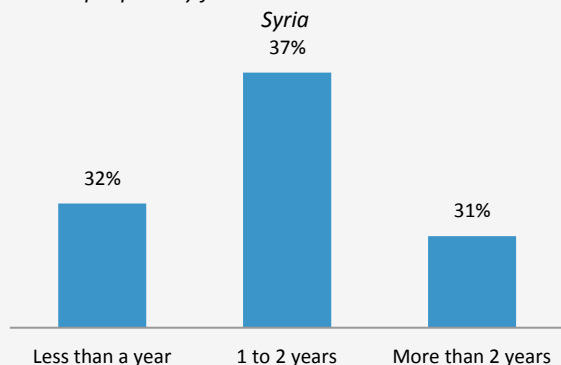
**OTHER** (<1%)

**60%** of those who stayed in another country for more than 6 months reported having no legal documentation in that country. The rest had temporary residence (15%), refugee card (9%), health card (10%) or other documents (6%)

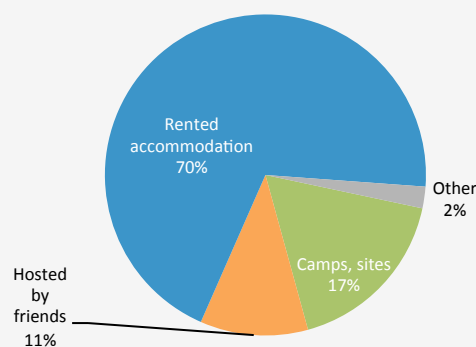
### *Main reason for departure from countries where people stay for 6 months or more outside Syria*



### *Distribution of time spent in countries where people stay for 6 months or more outside*



### *Main accommodation in countries where people stay for 6 months or more outside Syria*

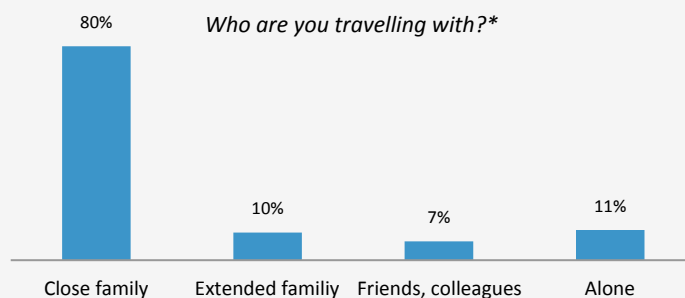


## TRAVELLING GROUP

**80%** of all respondents are travelling at least with a close **FAMILY MEMBER** (child, spouse, parent and sibling). 10% are travelling at least with a member of their extended family (in-law, uncle, aunt, cousin, etc.).

**11%** of all respondents are travelling **ALONE**.

### *Who are you travelling with?\**



\* in % of respondents. Respondents could provide multiple answer, hence total of all answers can be above 100%

## TRAVELLING GROUP

**18%** of respondents were part of a single male-headed household while travelling.

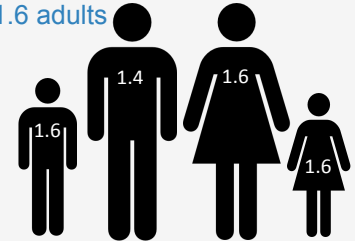
**19%** of respondents were part of a single female-headed household while travelling.

**Limitation:** 3% of the entire sample identified themselves as unaccompanied children. However, access to separate spaces for unaccompanied children was not always possible.

For respondents travelling with close and/or extended family, on average the **travelling family** is composed of:

**MALES:** 1.6 children, 1.4 adults

**FEMALES:** 1.6 children, 1.6 adults



7%

% who indicated having left behind a **SPOUSE**

40%

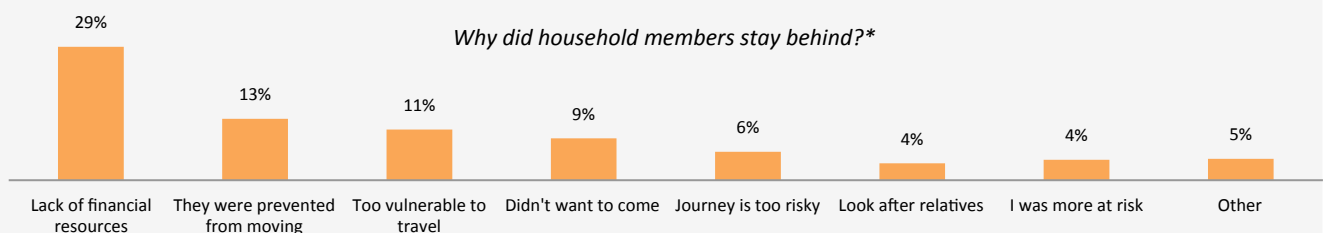
% who indicated having left behind **PARENTS**

13%

% who indicated having left behind **CHILDREN**

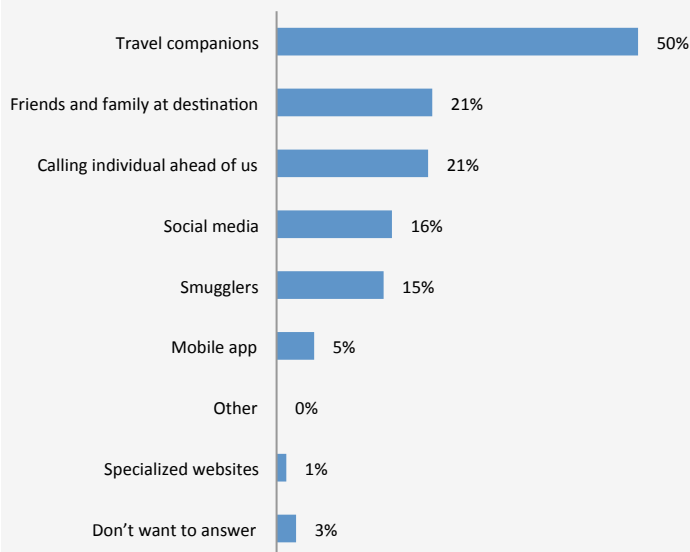
**59%** of respondents with close family members that were left behind, plan to eventually bring them to the country of destination

Why did household members stay behind?\*

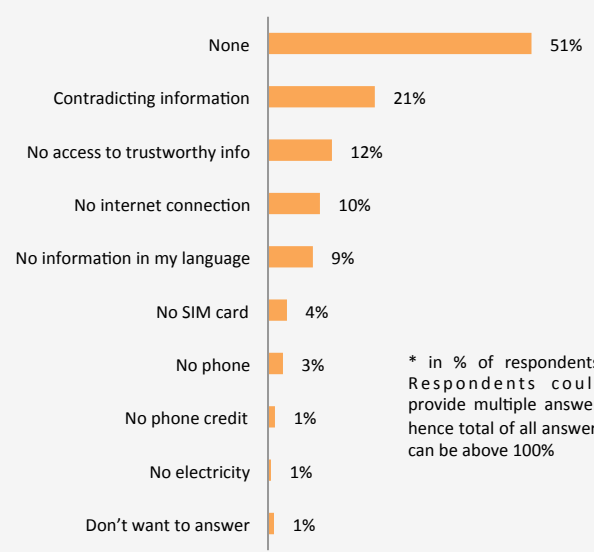


## ACCESS TO INFORMATION RELATED TO JOURNEY (ROUTE, PROCESS, etc.)

Information sources used\*



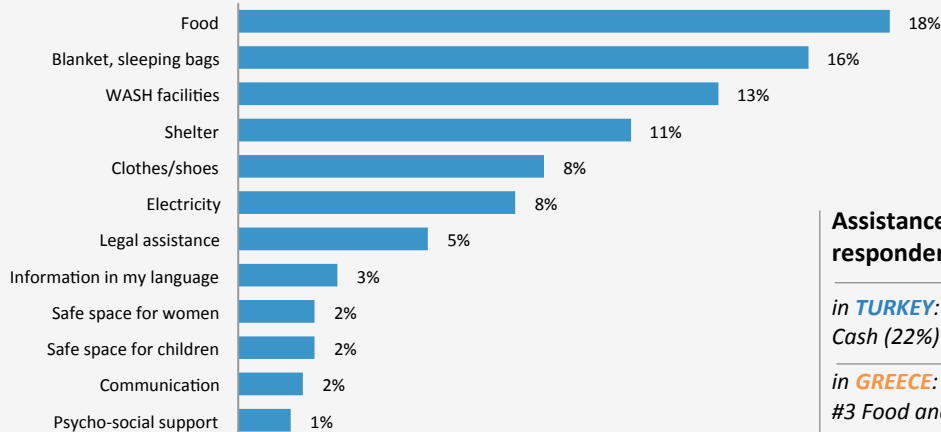
Main challenges to access information\*



\* in % of respondents. Respondents could provide multiple answer, hence total of all answers can be above 100%

## ASSISTANCE RECEIVED EN ROUTE AND GAPS

Type of assistance received in Greece



### Assistance gaps en route identified by respondents:

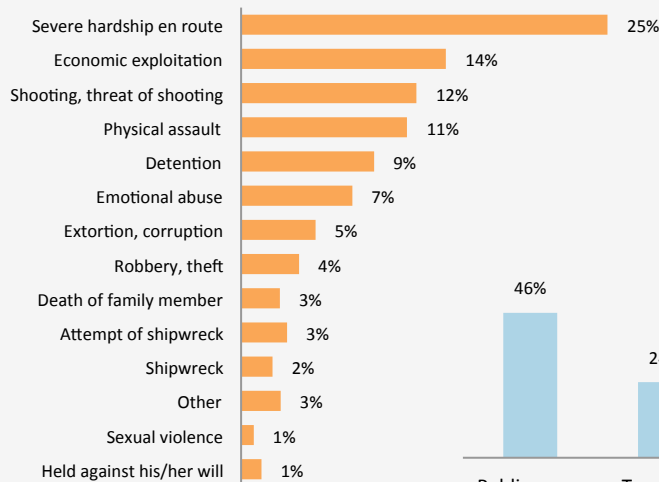
in **TURKEY**: #1 Shelter (42%), #2 Food (22%), #3 Cash (22%)

in **GREECE**: #1 Shelter (18%), #2 Medical (17%), #3 Food and winterized items (13%)

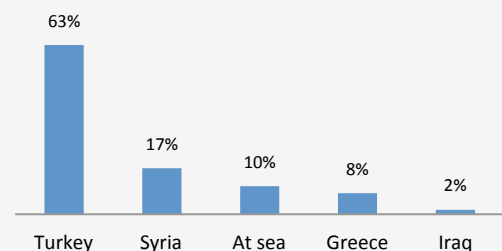
## PROTECTION

**46%** of respondents directly witnessed or experienced protection incidents during the journey.

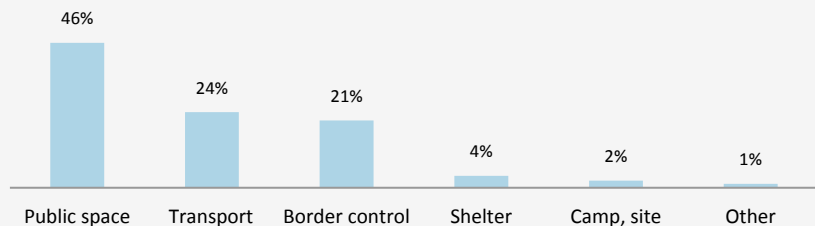
Protection incident witnessed or experienced



Where did the incident occur (country/sea)?



Where did the incident occur (location)?



**7%** of respondents have been separated from a family member during the journey. 64% of reported separations took place in Turkey. Of the 68 separation reports, none had found the separated individuals at the time of the interview.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)  
Supported by the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS)


**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on the maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Other sources: from: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

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