

May 2016

# Questionnaire findings for Syrians in Greece



© UNHCR/Achilleas Zavallis



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

## Context

Since the beginning of January until 31 May 2016, more than 75,000 Syrians made the journey across the Mediterranean to Greece bringing the total of arrivals in the first five months of the year to 156,823. During May there were 1,721 arrivals, of which 525 were Syrians.

## Methodology

During the first three months of 2016, UNHCR conducted a profiling of Syrian and Afghan arrivals to the Greek islands. As of 20 March, the situation on the islands changed and limitations on freedom of movement of new arrivals were implemented. UNHCR suspended the exercise for one month in order to make necessary adjustments.

In May, new interviews were conducted only with Syrians and Afghans who had not been previously interviewed by UNHCR and were living in open centres on the two islands (Lesvos, Chios) where open centres exist.

Interviews were conducted from 11 to 31 May by two teams of Arabic speakers in Dipethe, Vial and Souda on Chios, Kara Tepe, Iliachtida on Lesvos. Interviews were voluntary and interviewees could choose not to answer some questions. 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.

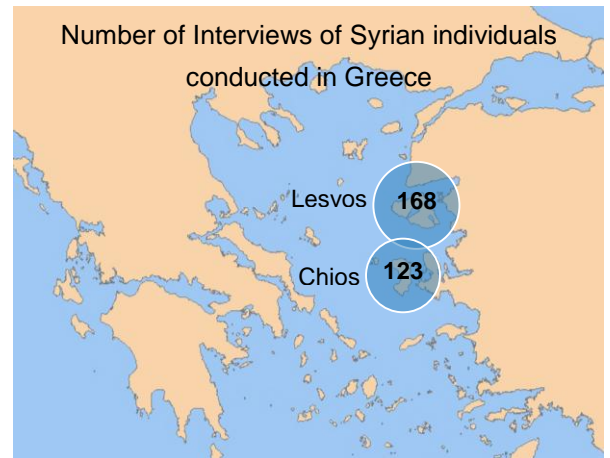
The methodology was designed using the individual as unit of analysis. The purpose of the methodology is to provide information on the interviewed population, not on the whole population on the islands, as the sample is not representative.

## Limitations

Enumerators did not access population living in detention centres on these islands (e.g., Moria on Lesvos). Enumerators did not access people on Leros, Samos, Kos or other islands where people living in open centres are very limited in numbers.

Persons in open centres were those who have either been released after the end of the maximum detention period or have been identified as vulnerable. The open centres therefore host a large part of the vulnerable population. Persons with vulnerabilities and families are likely over-represented in those centres. Individuals residing outside the locations where interviews were conducted (e.g., persons staying overnight in hotels) were likely not reached. Tensions were sometimes high and impacted on the ability of enumerators to reach the planned number of interviews.

Differently from the results analysed in previous UNHCR factsheets, the results below describe some key elements of the profile of the 291 interviewed Syrians only and are not representative of all Syrians on the Greek islands due to the limited sample size and above limitations. However, this analysis provides strong indications on the 'profile' of Syrians residing on the Greek islands during May. Comparing these results to those in previous UNHCR factsheets would be incorrect as the methodology and sample size were different.



## Key Findings

More than **92%** of respondents left Syria due to war/conflict

**86%** of respondents were internally displaced in Syria before starting the journey to Europe.

More than **85%** of respondents came directly from Syria and were not living in another country before coming to Greece.

**89%** of respondents directly witnessed or experienced protection incidents during the journey. Most of the protection incidents experienced or witnessed occurred in Turkey (**82%** of all incidents). The two main incidents experienced or witnessed by respondents were detention (**27%**) mainly in Turkey and shooting or threat of shooting (**19%**) only in Turkey.

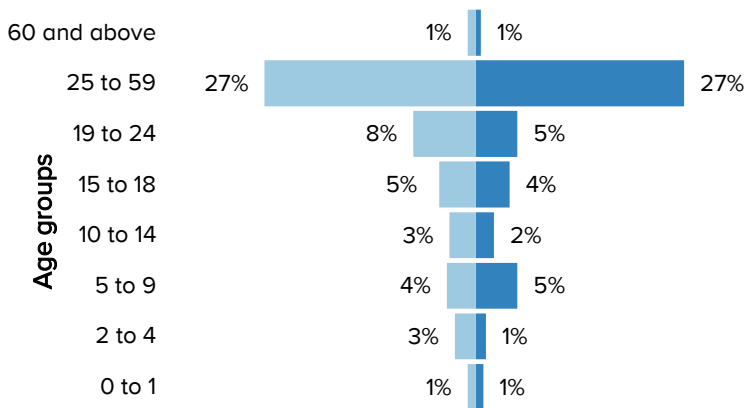
**83%** of respondents are travelling with at least one member of close family (father/mother, spouse, children, siblings)

**62%** of respondents have left close family members behind. Lack of financial resources was the main reason. **36%** of those, plan to eventually bring them to the country of destination.

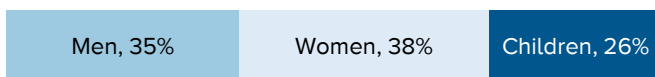
In the current situation, **77%** of the respondents want to go to another European country. The main reasons to choose the intended destination country are (**45%**) family already on that country.

## Socio – Demographic Information

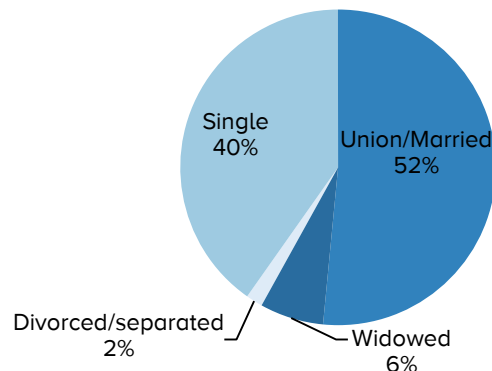
Age and Gender breakdown of interviewed Syrians



% of the interviewed population



Marital Status



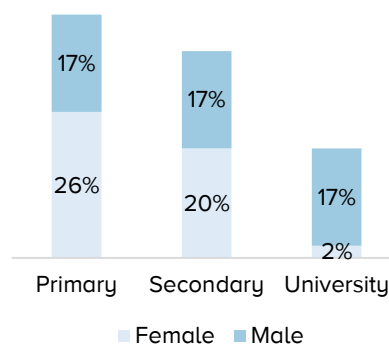
1% of women interviewed are pregnant  
 4% of women interviewed are lactating  
 4% have a physical disability  
 16% have a severe medical condition

61% of female respondents are single or widowed. However, it must be taken into consideration that open centers host a large part of the vulnerable population, therefore over represented.

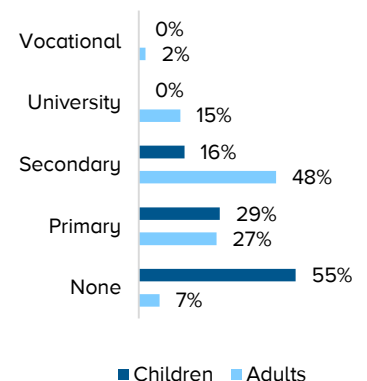
## Education

17% of all respondents are students, 90% of whom have interrupted their education to take this journey. Most frequent levels of education interrupted are **PRIMARY**, **SECONDARY** and **UNIVERSITY**.

Level of education interrupted

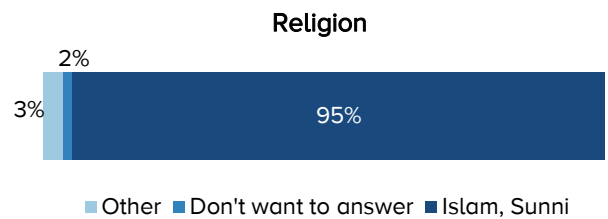
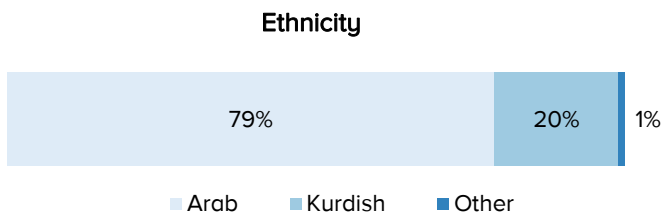


Highest level of education completed >4 years old



From the respondents that indicated that their education was interrupted due to the journey, most that were on primary (26%) and secondary (20%) level of education were females, while most that were on university were males.

## Religion and Ethnicity



## Professional background



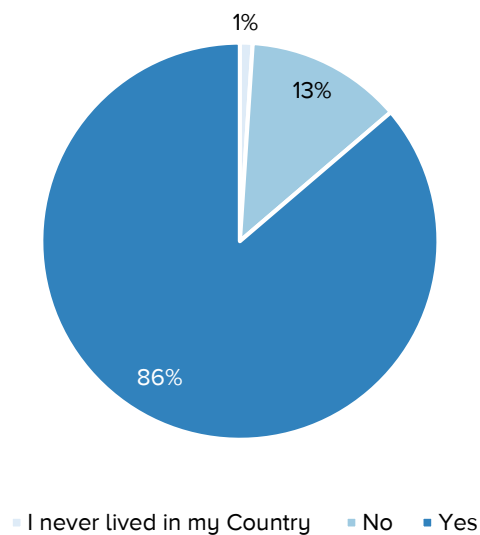
**17%** of adult respondents did not have professional activities back in the country of origin. All of those are WOMEN.

**27%** of all women indicated no professional/education activities before leaving their place of residence.

Moreover **47%** indicated Services as their professional activity.

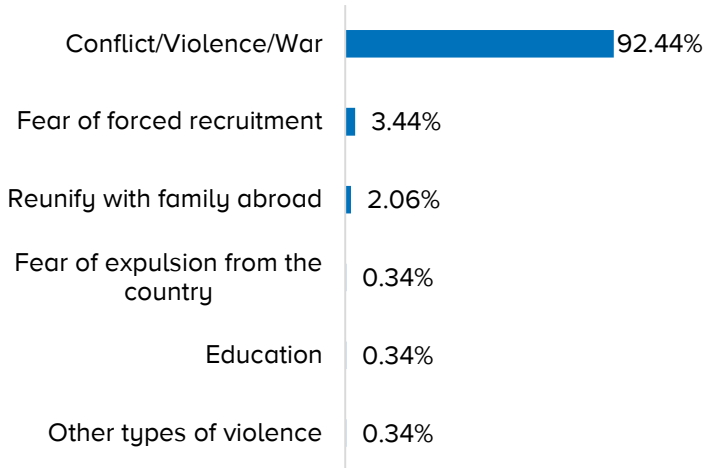
## Internal displacement

Internally displaced due to violence/conflict in Syria before journey



## Reasons to leave Syria

### Main reasons to leave country of origin



## Journey

**82%** of all respondents left Syria in **2016**

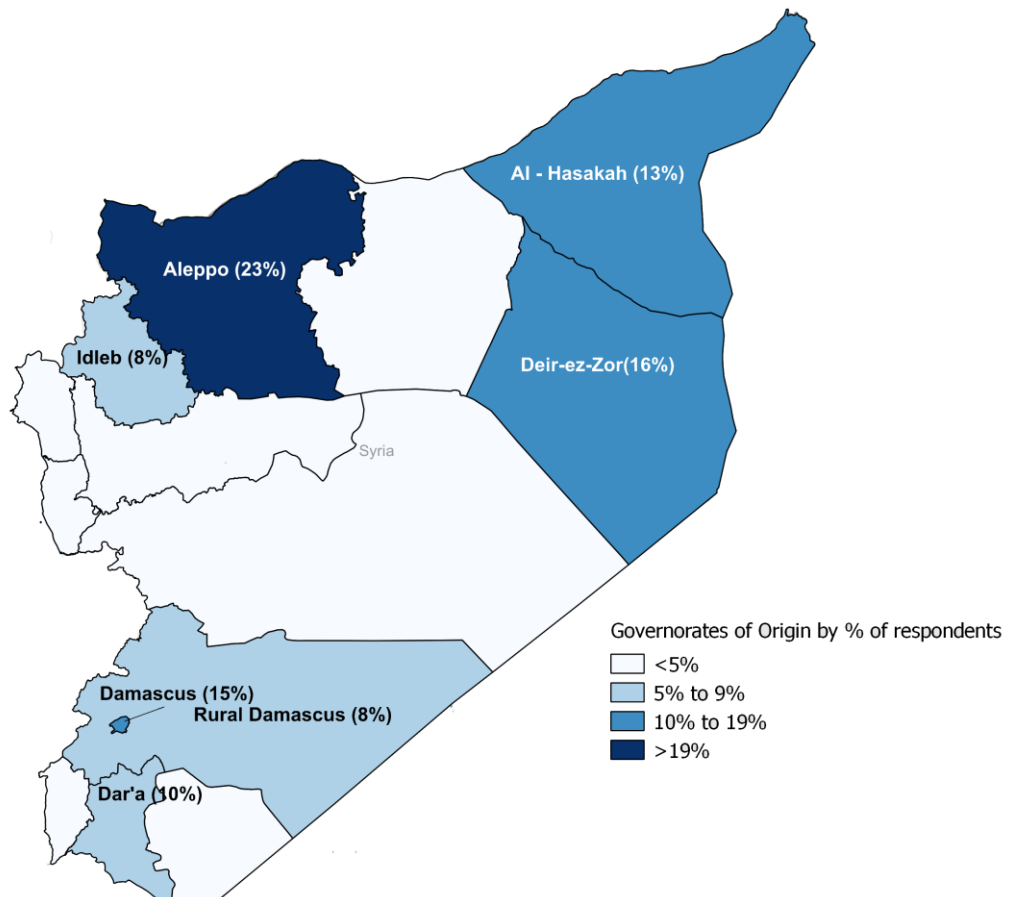
**9%** of all respondents left Syria in **2015**

**89%** of all respondents left Syria before **20th March 2016**



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

### Governorates of origin in Syria



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

**82%** - SYRIA > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians coming directly from Syria).

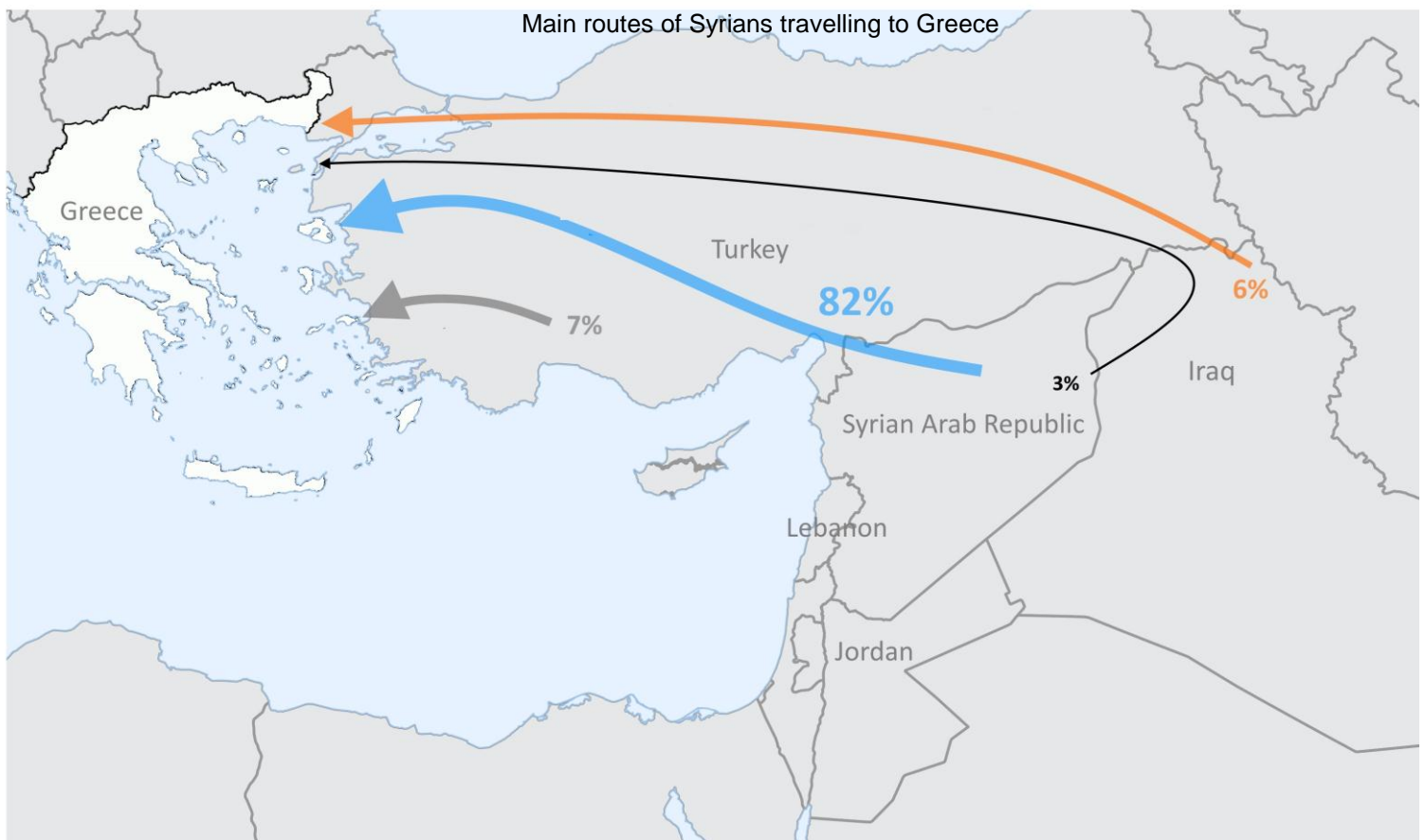
**7%** - TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians previously living in Turkey).

**6%** - IRAQ > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians previously living in Iraq).

**3%** - SYRIA > IRAQ > TURKEY > GREECE (Syrians coming directly from Syria).

(<3% other minor routes).

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



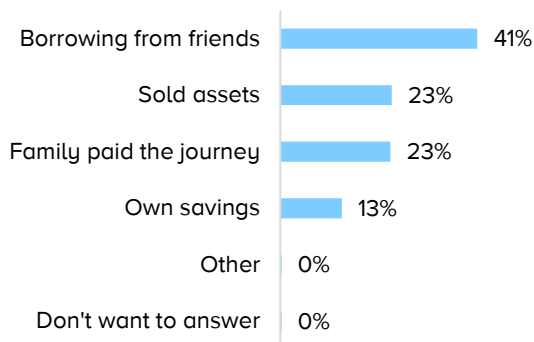
### Reasons for choosing destination countries



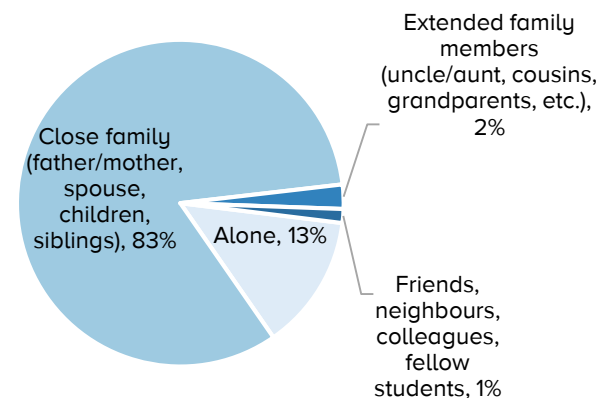
In % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.

The main reasons to choose the intended destination country are **(45%)** family already on that country and respect for human rights and safety in the country of destination **(17%)**.

### Main ways to finance the journey



### Who are you travelling with\*



\* in % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.

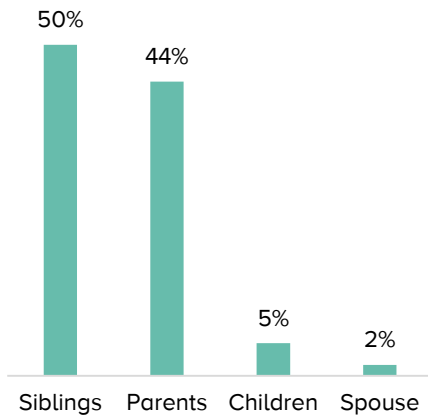
**83%** of all respondents were travelling with at least one close family member.

Of those travelling with family members, **15%** were travelling with one more family member, **16%** with two more family members, **20%** with four more family members, and **49%** were travelling with more than 4 family members.

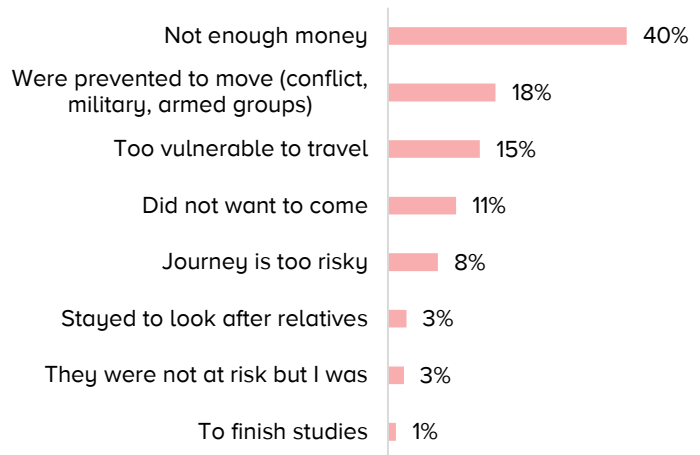
**62%** of respondents have left close family members behind, **36%** of those, plan to eventually bring them to the country of destination.



**Family members left behind\***



**Why did household members stay behind?\***

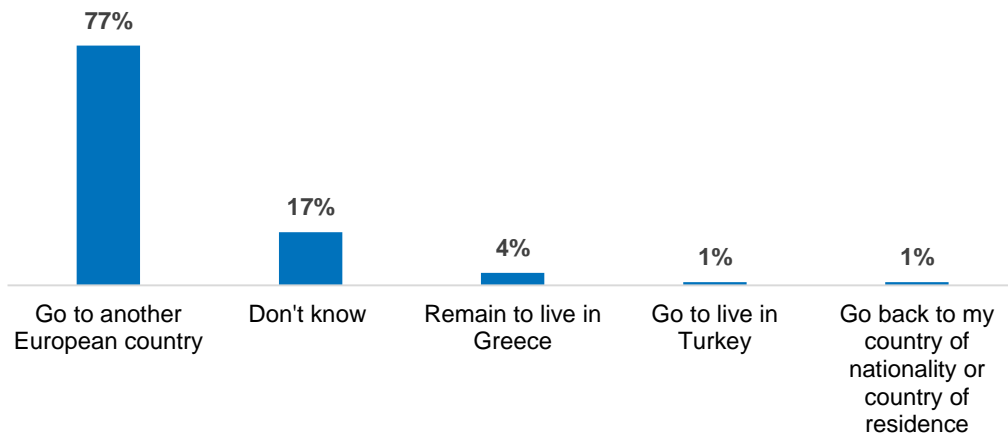


\* in % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.

Lack of financial resources was the main reason why family members were left behind. However, **18%** stated that family members were prevented from moving by conflict, military or armed groups.

In the current situation, most of the respondents (**77%**) want to go to another European country.

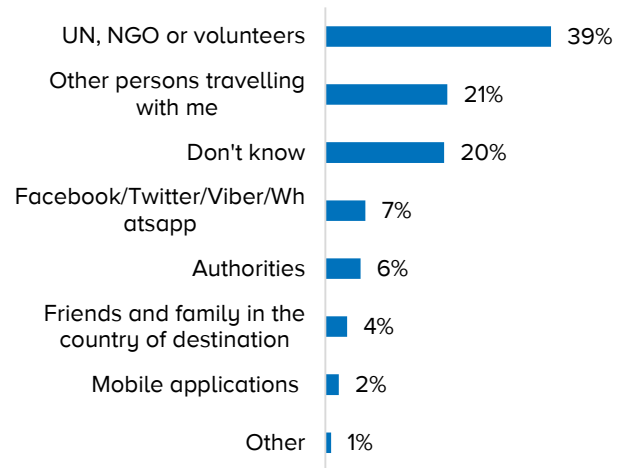
**Now, in the current situation, what do you intend to do?**



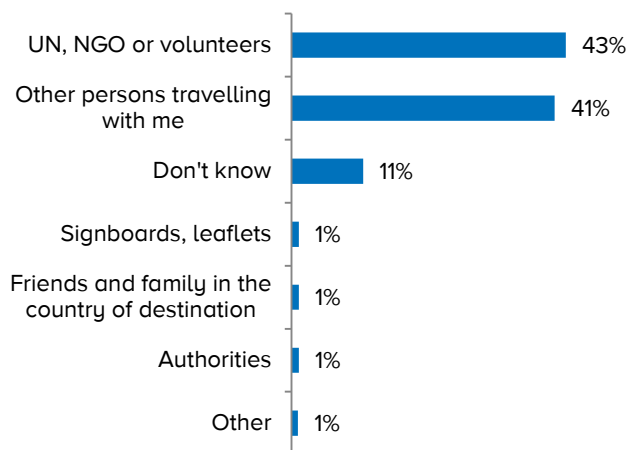
## Access to Information

Main sources of information on options for their future are UN, NGOs and volunteers (39% of respondents) and other persons travelling with them (21% of respondents).

How do you access information on what your options now and for the future are\*?



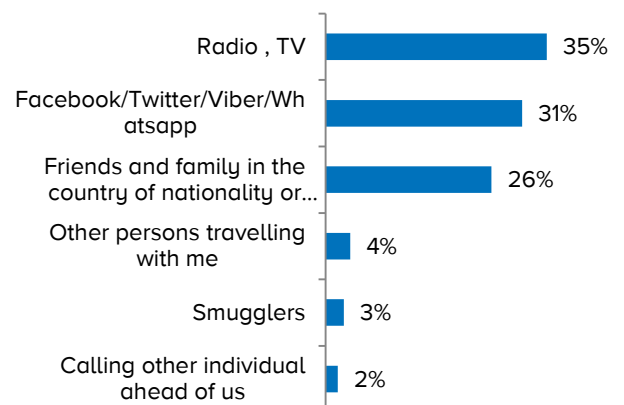
How do you access information on how to access services you need here\*?



Main sources of information on how to access services are UN, NGOs and volunteers (43% of respondents) and other persons travelling with them (41% of respondents).

Main sources of information on the journey and life in Europe before they started the journey were media (35%), social media (31%) and friends and family in country where they were living (26% of respondents).

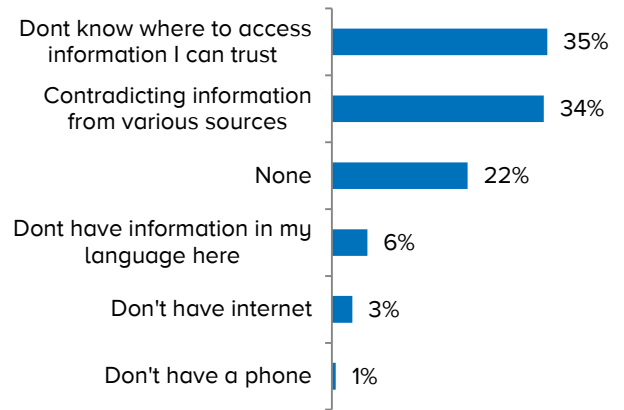
How did you access information about the trip and the life in Europe before your journey\*?



\* in % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.

Main challenges in currently accessing information are identifying where to access information they can trust (35%) and existence of contradicting information from various sources (34%). 22% stated they do not face challenges in accessing information.

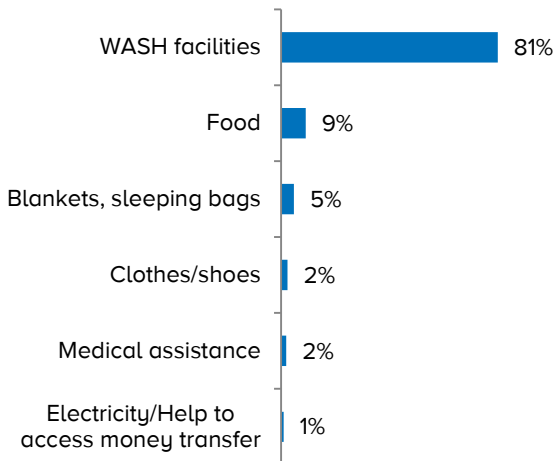
**What are the main challenges to access information right now\*?**



\* in % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.

## Assistance received and gaps

**Access to assistance in any country en route\***



**Top three Assistance gaps en route identified:**

**En route:** Electricity (22%), Cash assistance (18%) and WASH facilities (16%).

**In Turkey:** Medical assistance (33%), Shelter (17%) and Cash assistance (17%).

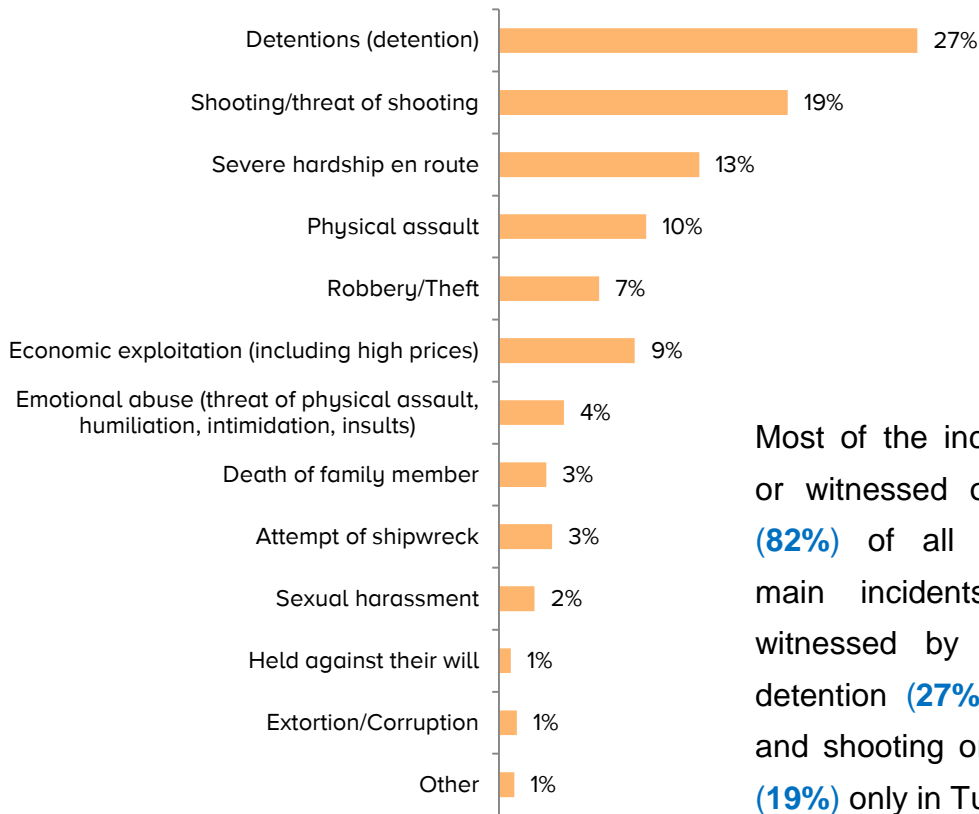
**In Greece:** Electricity (25%), Cash assistance (18%) and WASH facilities (17%).

\* in % of responses. Respondents could provide multiple answers.



**89%** of respondents directly witnessed or experienced protection incidents during the journey.

#### Protection incidents witnessed or experienced



Most of the incidents experienced or witnessed occurred in Turkey (**82%**) of all incidents). The two main incidents experienced or witnessed by respondents were detention (**27%**) mainly in Turkey and shooting or threat of shooting (**19%**) only in Turkey.

**Protection:** 6% of respondents have been from a family member during the journey. 69% of reported separations took place in Turkey. Of the 16 separations report, none had found the separated individuals at the time of the interview.

**Limitations:** Considering the profiling was not conducted on closed centers at the time of the interviews, protection incidents in Greece might not be properly represented on this document and the actual number is more likely higher.

#### PUBLISHED BY:

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

#### Contact:

For UNHCR: Javed Khan [khanjav@unhcr.org](mailto:khanjav@unhcr.org) and Ioannis Papachristodoulou [papachri@unhcr.org](mailto:papachri@unhcr.org).

For JIPS: Damien Jusselme, Profiling Advisor, [jusselme@jips.org](mailto:jusselme@jips.org)

[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)