



# 12<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies presentation by UNHCR

27 May 2015

1. Latest figures and update
2. National context and background
3. 2014 Conclusions and 2015 Patterns
4. UNHCR's protection work in Italy





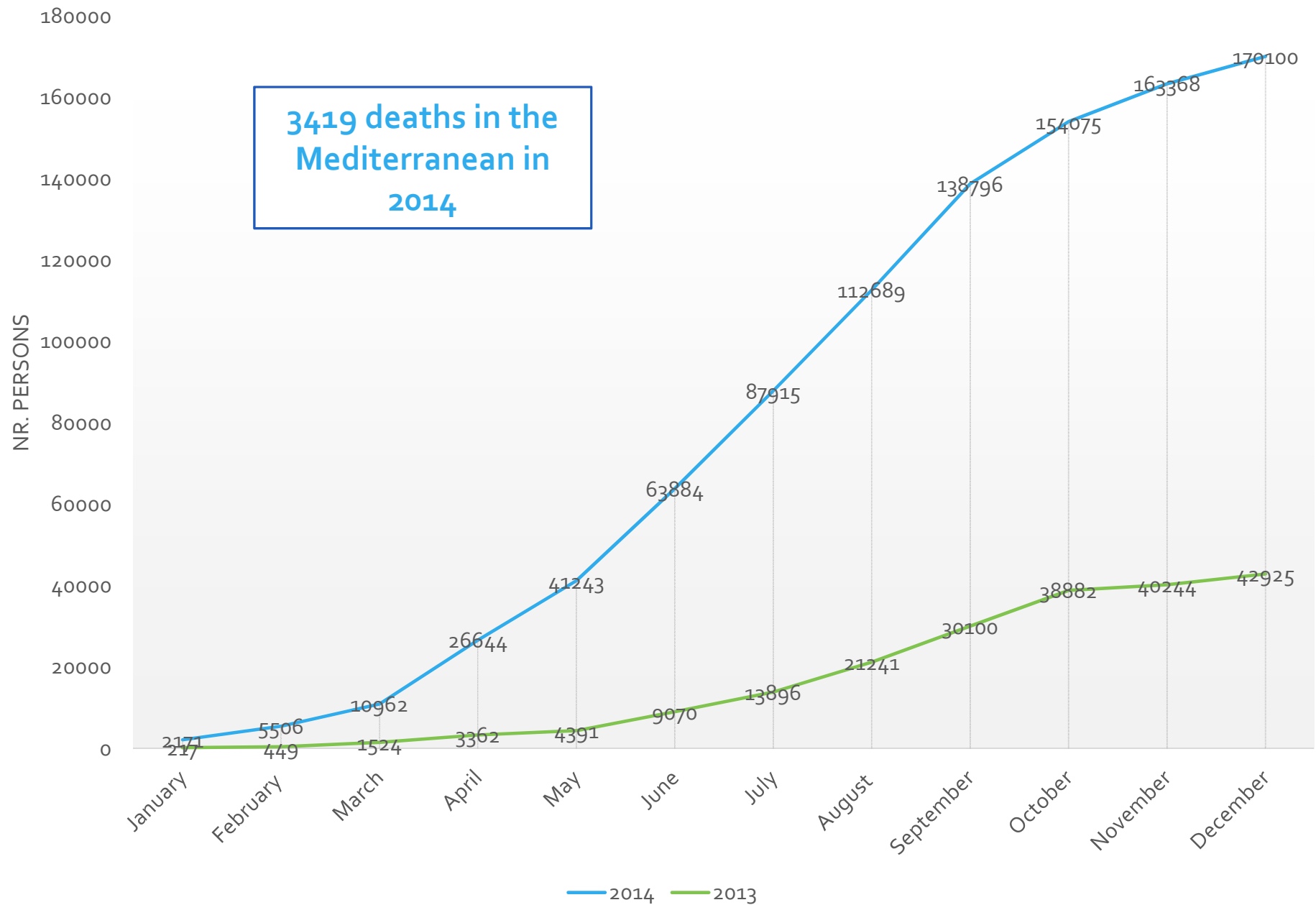
# Mixed migratory flows – persons with different rights and needs

- Migrants
- Unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs)
- Victims of torture
- Refugees
- Asylum Seekers
- Traffickers
- Survivors of trauma and /or torture

## **Different approach:**

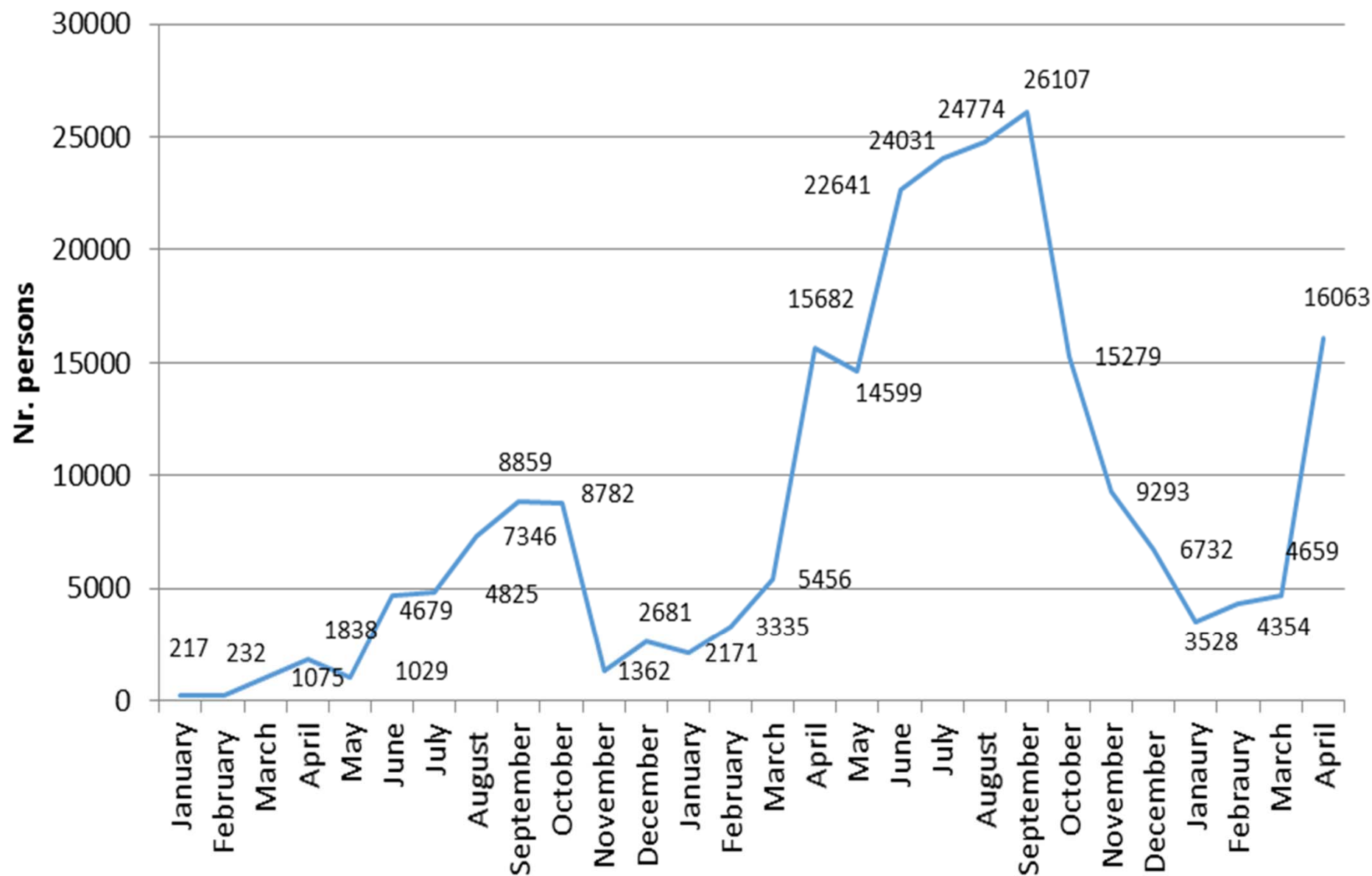
- a) border patrolling/controlling,**
- b) guaranteeing international protection,**
- c) humanitarian assistance.**

## Sea arrivals to Italy December 2013-2014



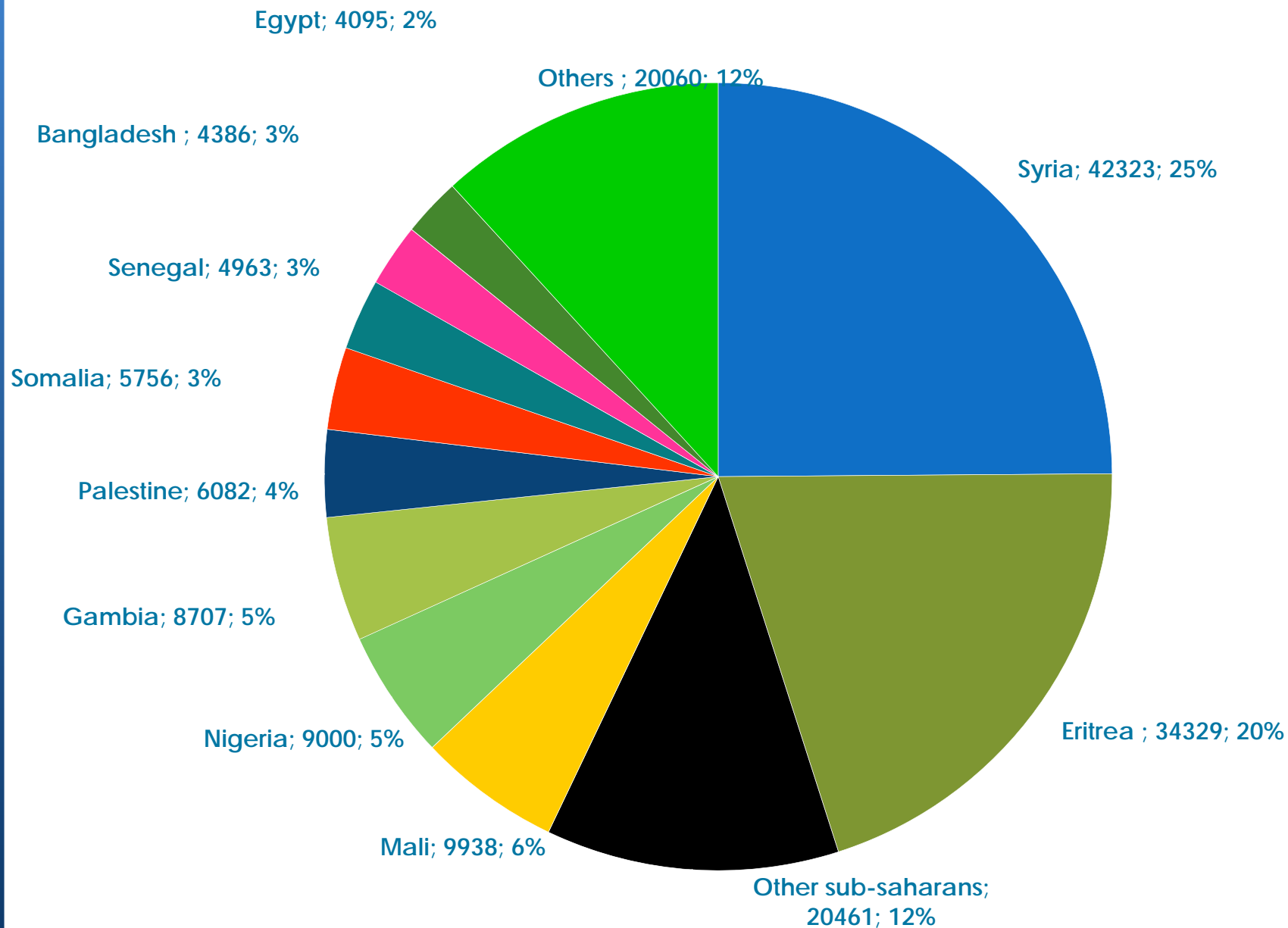
# Monthly sea arrivals to Italy

January 2013-April 2015



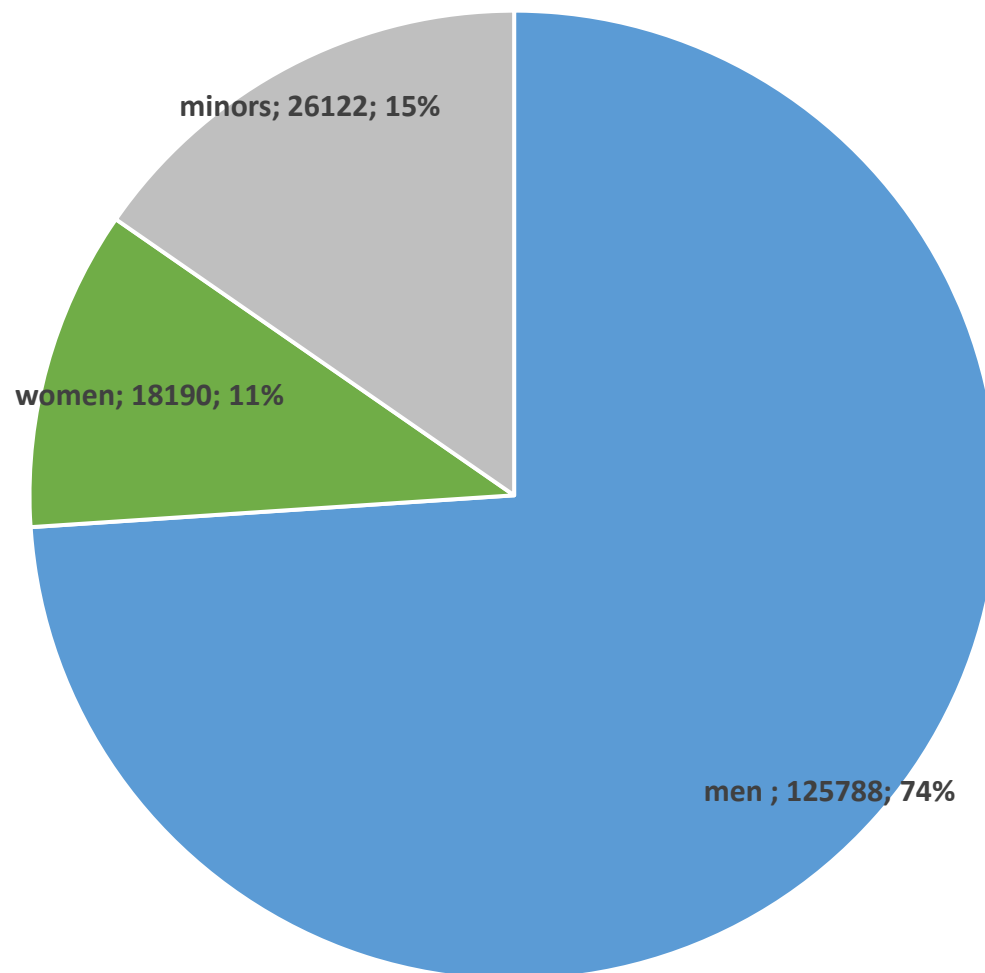
# Sea arrivals to Italy by nationality

*December 2014*



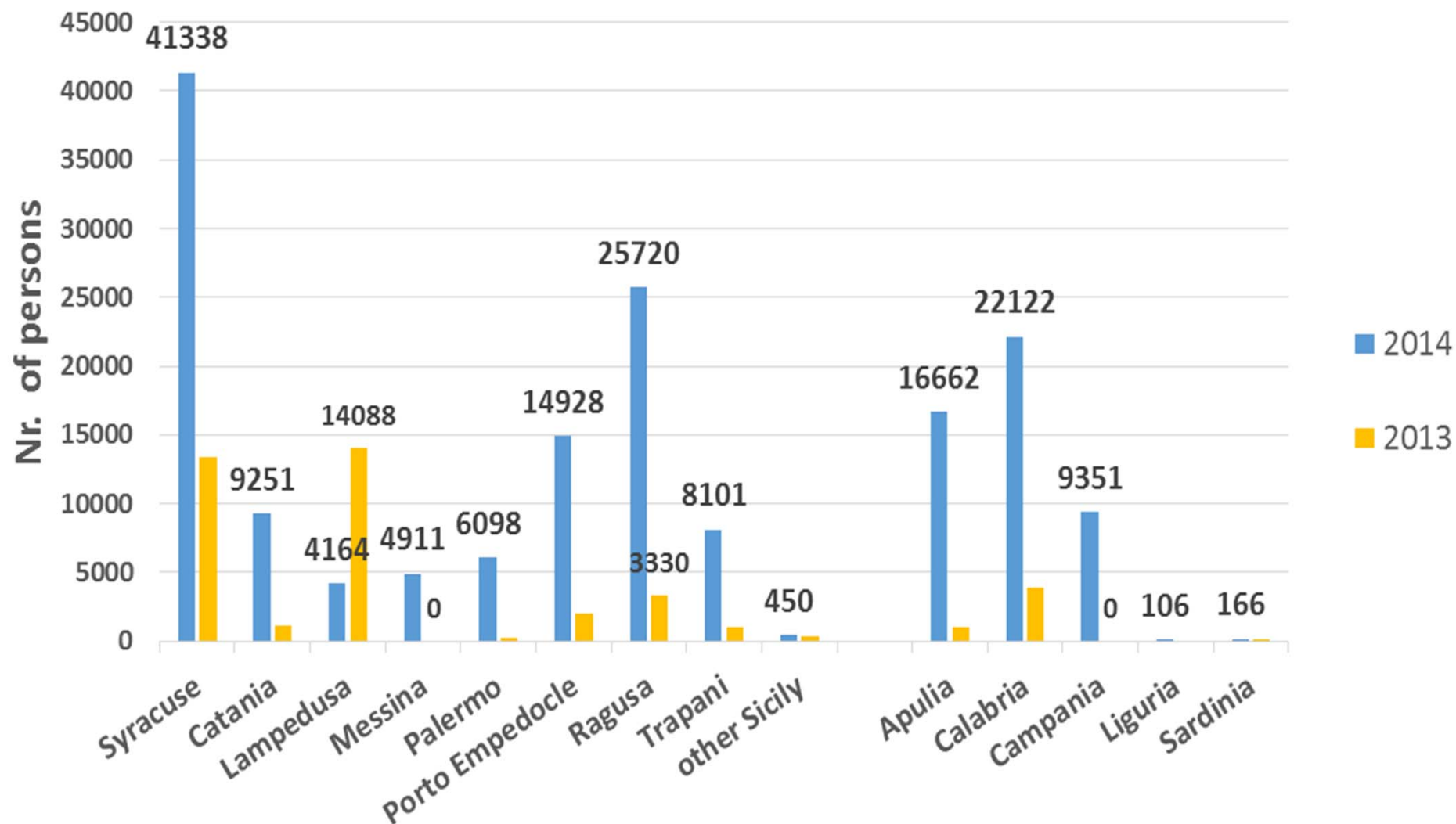
## Sea arrivals by groups

*December 2014*

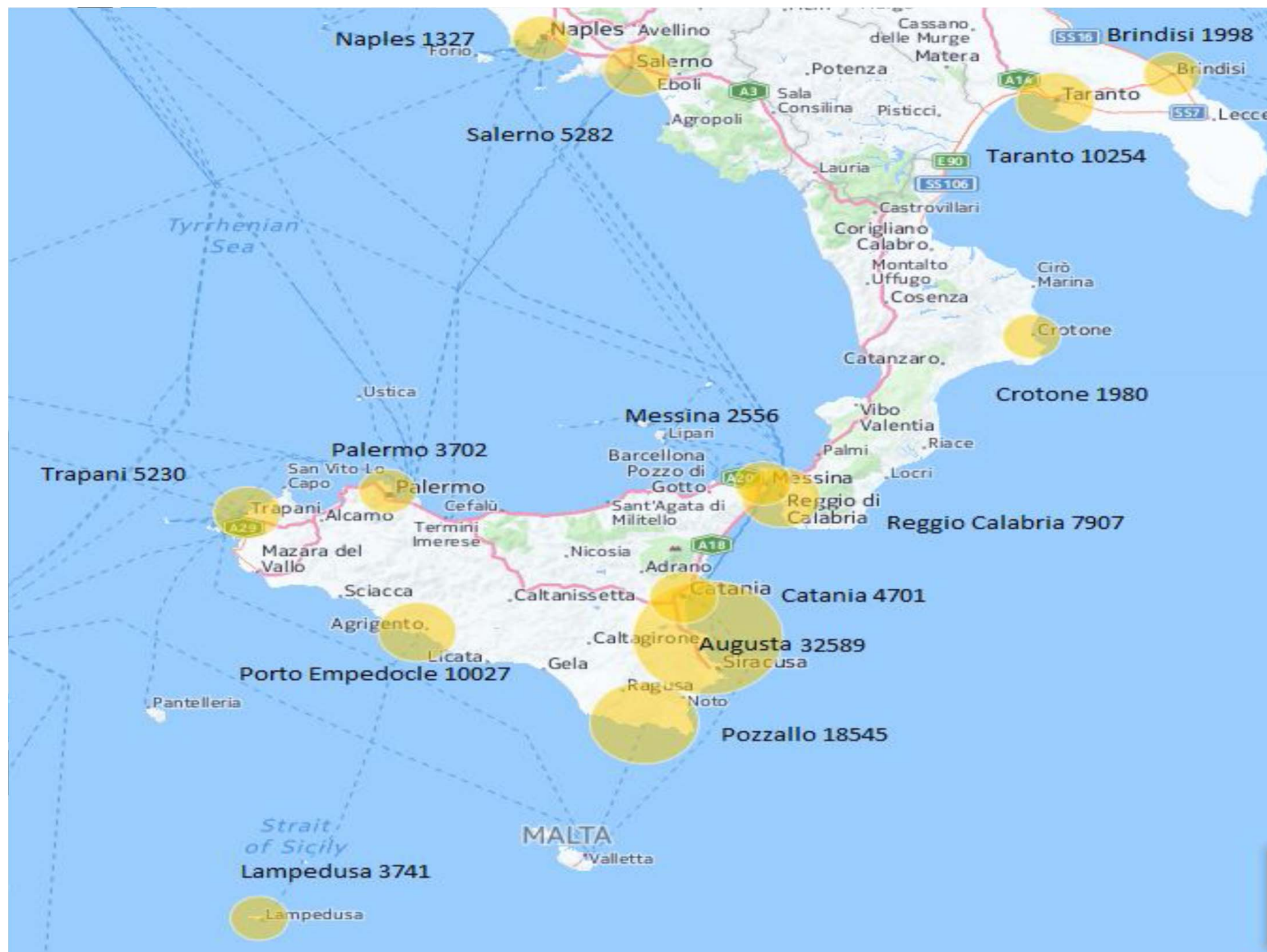


## Places of arrival

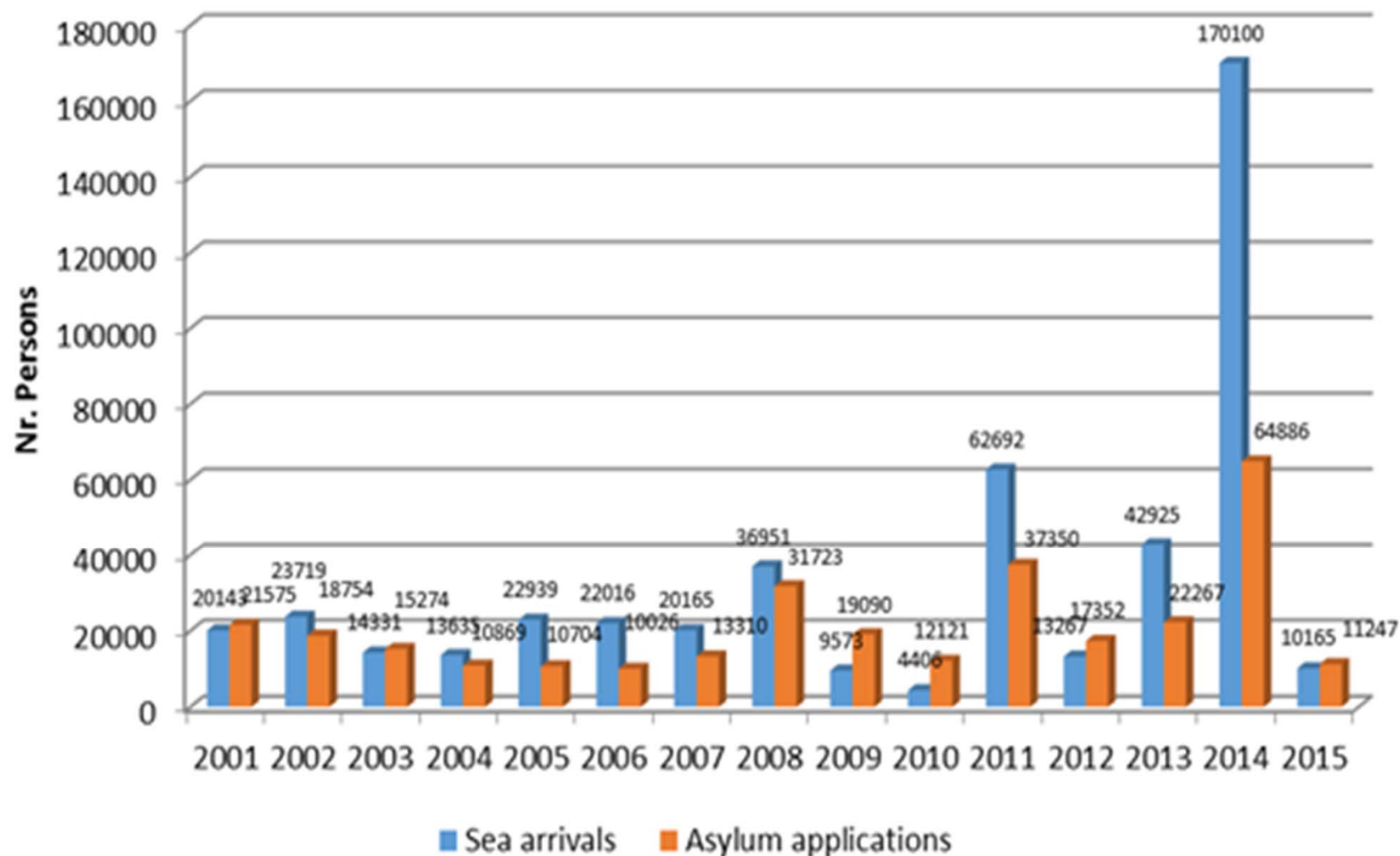
November 2013-2014



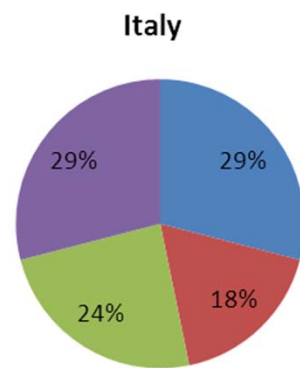




## Sea-arrivals and asylum applications 2001-2015



## First instance recognition rates in 2013



- 29% refugee status
- 18% subsidiary protection
- 24% humanitarian protection
- 29% rejections

# 2014 Conclusions and 2015 Patterns (mid May)

## *Figures*

1. Total figure for 2014 for sea arrivals to Italy stands at **170.100 refugees and migrants (almost 50% were from Syrian and Eritrea)**. This corresponds to an increase of 400% (four times the figures from 2013 with 43'000 arrivals). Now till **22 May 2015 we count approx. 41'500 arrivals to Italy.**
2. Some **3.419 refugees and migrants perished** in accidents and incidences on the Mediterranean during 2014 and did not arrive! **This year so far 1'800 died or went missing!**

# 2014 Conclusions and 2015 Patterns (end of April)

## *Sea arrivals*

- 3.** Where as 85% of departures in 2014 took place from Libya with rather small boats (fishing boats and rubber dinghies) **recent departures show that 95% of boats currently left from Libya.**
- 4.** Militia groups and criminal syndicates are organising in a professional way departures with 200 – 500 persons on board.
- 5.** At the time when we saw old cargo vessels involved in the transport of refugees and migrants (departing from Turkey) financial turn over of such vessels can easily reach US\$ 3.5 million and more! Old vessels are available starting at US\$ 150'000.



# 2014 Conclusions and 2015 Patterns (end of April)

## *Syria*

6. Syria continue “to produce” daily more refugees

The current number is close to 3.9 million refugees

- 94% of them are still living in neighbouring countries of Syria (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq)

- only 6% (around 200.000) reached Europe

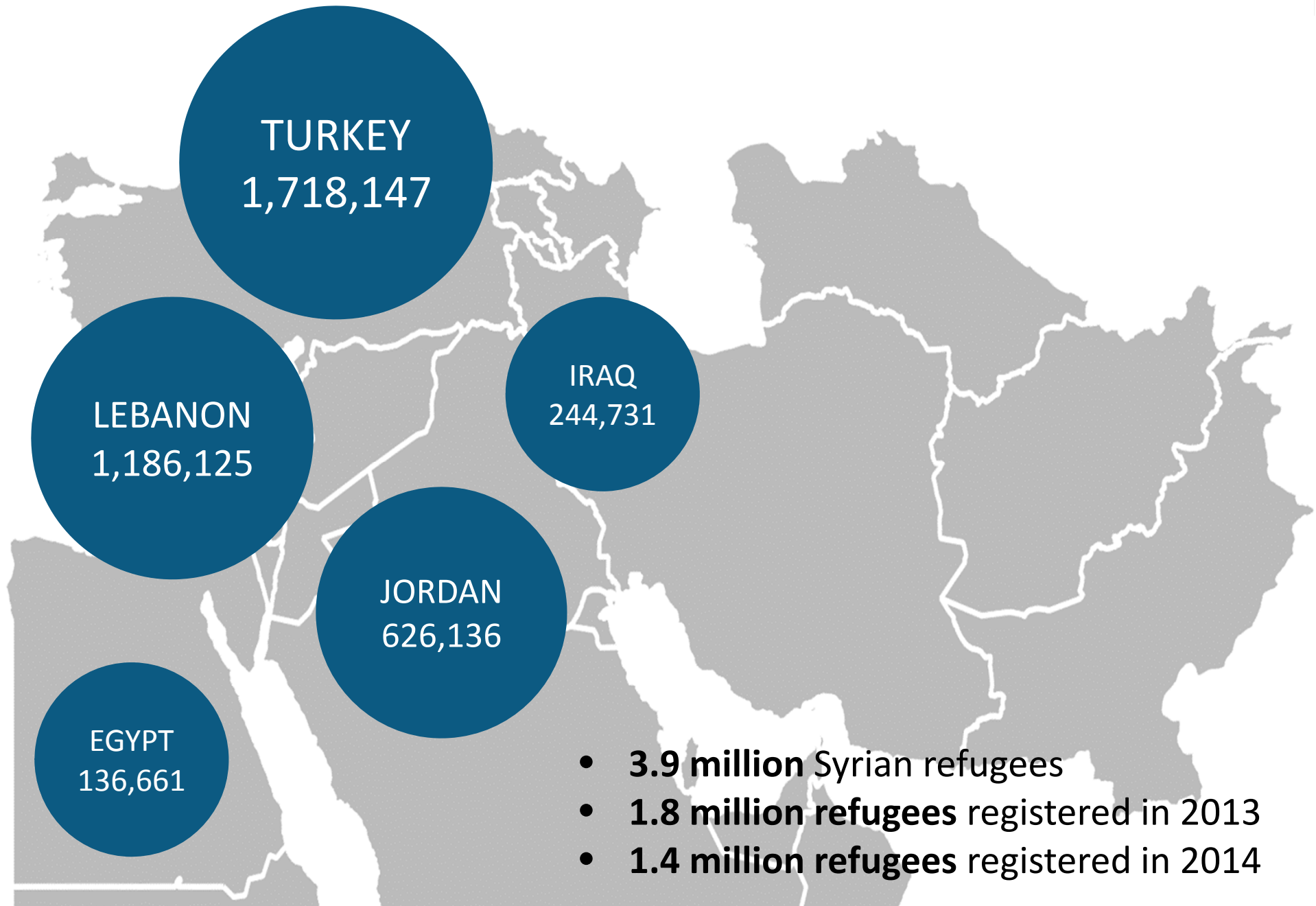
7. And eventually... apart from a very limited number of resettlement places for Syrian refugees to get resettled to Europe (currently 35.000 places) no legal alternatives exist for refugees to reach Europe.

# Syria Crisis

- More than four years of conflict inside Syria and major offensives in Iraq are causing new mass displacement and posing a growing threat to the stability, security and fabric of the Middle East region.
- There is no political solution in sight.
- The operating environment has been characterized by the large and ever increasing scale of external and internal displacement and proportionate growth in humanitarian responses; the pace of change; and complexity of issues at hand.
- The increasing scope of violence and destruction makes it clear that it will be some time before millions of displaced Syrians will be able to safely return home.

The impact on refugee-hosting countries is unprecedented.

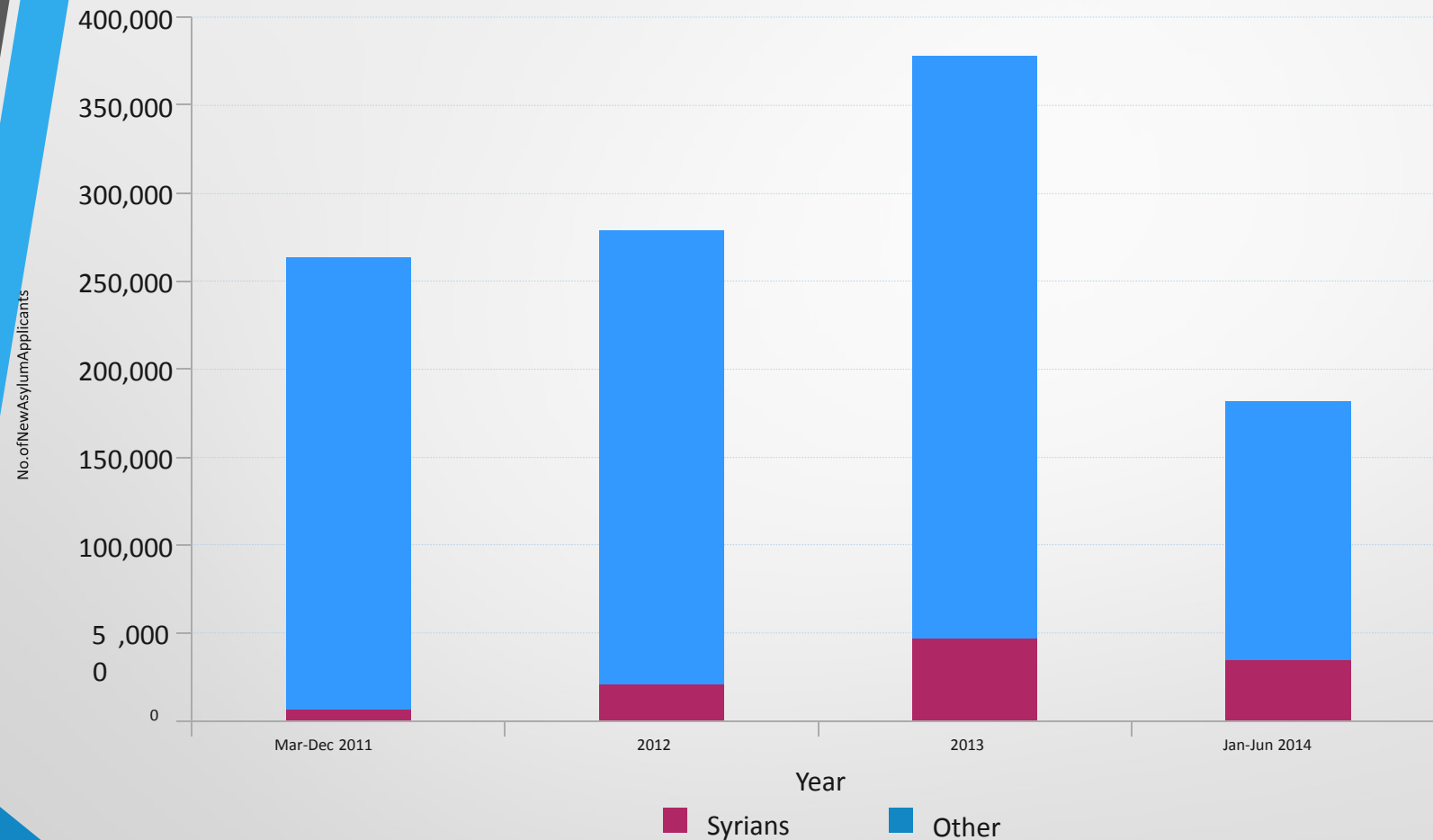
# SYRIAN REFUGEE POPULATION



# The Syrian Crisis in Europe

- The total number of Syrians who have reached, and applied for asylum, in the 28 member states of the European Union (EU) in the three years up to the end of 2014 was approximately 200.000
- Within the EU, Sweden and Germany have received the majority of Syrian asylum applications in the last 3 years; 50.235 and 46.265 applications, respectively.
- Excluding these two countries, the remaining 26 countries in the EU have received a total of 53.605 Syrian asylum applications in the 3 years to October 2014 and pledged 5.105 resettlement places.

## Syrian and Total New Asylum Applicants to EU28 Countries





# Key provisions in Italian legislation

Art. 19 Consolidated Text on Immigration (Testo Unico sull'Immigrazione) In no case, it can be ordered the expulsion or refoulement to a country in which the alien may be subject to persecution for reasons of race, sex, language, nationality , religion, political opinions, and personal or social conditions , or might risk being sent to another state where it is not protected from persecution.

Art. 11 par. 6 At border crossing points, reception services are set-up in order to provide information and assistance to foreign nationals who wish to apply for asylum or enter Italy for a stay of longer than three months. These services are made available, where possible, within the transit zone.

# The role of the UNHCR globally

- UNHCR has a supervisory responsibility over Governments' implementation of the 1951 Refugee Convention (which sets an obligation on State parties to grant *refugee status* under the terms of the 1951 Refugee Convention to all those who require international protection)
- UNHCR's work: humanitarian and non-political
- Mandate: U2
  - To provide international protection to refugees
  - And to seek durable solutions to their problems

That in support to Governments which remain primarily responsible for the provision of international protection

## Diapositiva 20

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U2

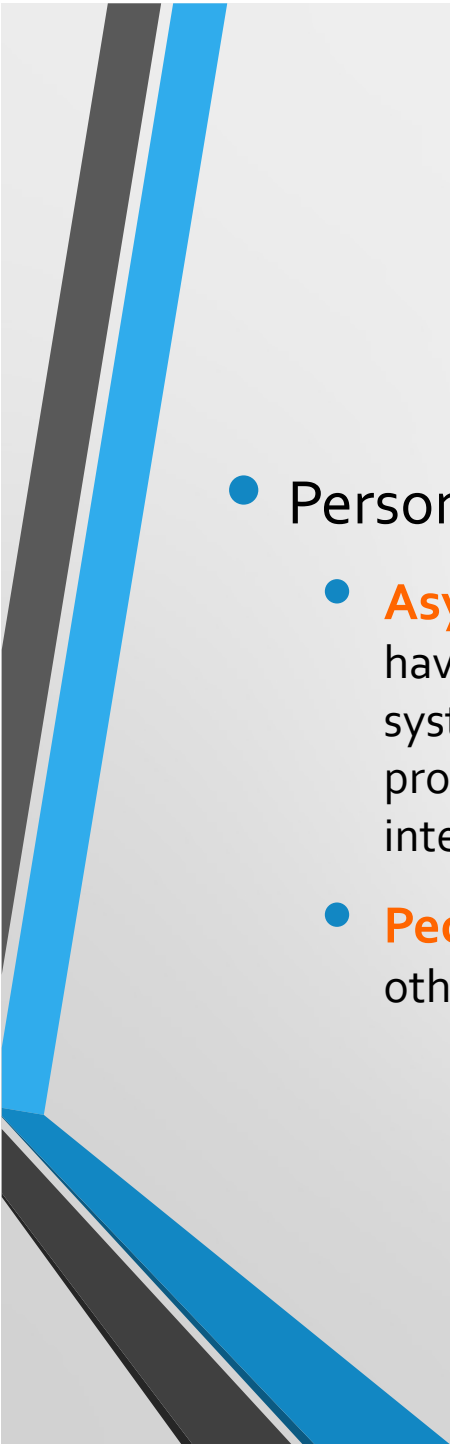
Working definition of protection:

All actions aimed at ensuring the equal access to and enjoyment of the rights of women, men, girls, and boys of concern to UNHCR, in accordance with the relevant bodies of law

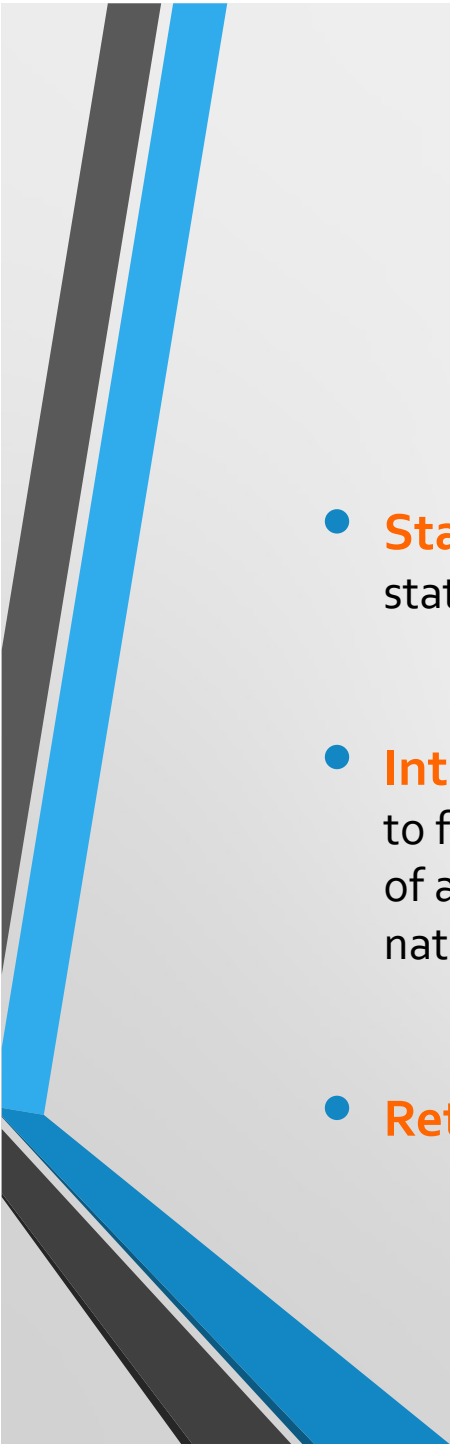
UNHCRUser; 10/05/2011

# A short reminder: Some Definitions

- Who's a **refugee**?
  - *"A person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (1951 Refugee Convention)*
- Elements:
  - Well-founded fear of persecution
  - 5 possible grounds for persecution
  - Outside the country of nationality (or residence)
  - Cannot return to it, or is not willing to do so, because of that fear

- 
- Persons of concern to UNHCR in addition to **refugees**:
    - **Asylum-seekers**: persons who request protection but whose claims have not yet been definitively evaluated through national asylum systems. Asylum-seekers who have been denied access to an asylum procedure are also included, as they may be found in need of international protection once their procedure is completed.
    - **People** who are entitled to **subsidiary forms of protection** under other international or regional treaties.



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- **Stateless persons:** they are not considered to be national by any states under its laws. A stateless person can also be a refugee.
  - **Internally displaced persons (IDPs):** persons who have been forced to flee their homes, but still remain within their own territory, as a result of armed conflicts, general violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters.
  - **Returnees:** persons who voluntarily return to their homes.

# UNHCR and access to the territory

- Technical support and monitoring regarding the principle of *non refoulement*
- Advocacy on protection sensitive border control mechanisms
- Intervention on individual cases
- Praesidium project

# The Praesidium Project

- Start in 2006 and renewed every year, in 2014 ninth phase, funds by the Ministry of Interior and European Commission (ERF, EBF and AMIF)
- From Lampedusa to Sicily mainland, Calabria, Apulia, Sardinia
- UNHCR, IOM, Italian Red Cross and since 2008, Save the children
- Multi-agency approach: according to the respective mandate in the context of mixed migratory flows, field office and cultural mediators



**Save the Children**  
Italia ONLUS

# Activities

- Assistance at landing, provision of information and support in the identification of vulnerable cases
- Monitoring access to the territory and the asylum procedure
- Monitoring reception standards at disembarkation and technical support to local authorities
- Monitoring reception standards in government centers, in joint Commissions with Prefectures and Provincial Police HQs (*Questura*)
- Information gathering on trends, on-the-job training, networking with local NGOs

# Intelligence 2011

- 1) How long were you in Libya? Where/how did you live?
- 2) Did you try to come to Italy before?
- 3) Have you ever been detained in Libya?
- 4) What is present situation in Libya?
- 5) Why did you leave Libya? Have you been subject to violence, by whom? Have you been under threat, by whom?
- 6) When did you decide? Had you considered leaving Libya before the crisis started?
- 7) Did you try to flee to Tunisia or to Egypt by land?
- 8) How was the crossing organized? By whom? What was the point of departure?
- 9) Can you describe the crossing to Italy? How long did it take? Did you encounter any particular problem during the crossing?
- 10) Do you know of other [of the applicant's nationality and others] who are still in Libya and planning to leave? If yes, how many? Are they planning to come to Italy?
- 11) When did you leave your home country?
- 12) Can you return to your home country? Yes No
- If no, briefly specify the reasons:



# Locations and staffing

## TEAM PRAESIDIUM



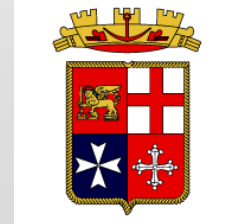
# Cooperation

At the local level:

- Prefecture
- Provincial Police HQs
- Coast Guard and Tax and Customs Police
- National Health System
- Municipalities
- Port authorities

At the Rome level:

- Department Civil Liberties and Immigration-Mol
- Border Police-Mol
- Navy



# Praesidium Recommendations and Best Practices



# Rescue at Sea



<http://www.refworld.org/docid/54b365554.html>

# Sustainability of Praesidium activities

Art. 8 EU PROCEDURES DIRECTIVE Information and counselling in detention facilities and at border crossing points

1. Where there are indications that third-country nationals or stateless persons held in detention facilities or present at border crossing points, including transit zones, at external borders, may wish to make an application for international protection, Member States shall provide them with information on the possibility to do so. In those detention facilities and crossing points, Member States shall make arrangements for interpretation to the extent necessary to facilitate access to the asylum procedure.

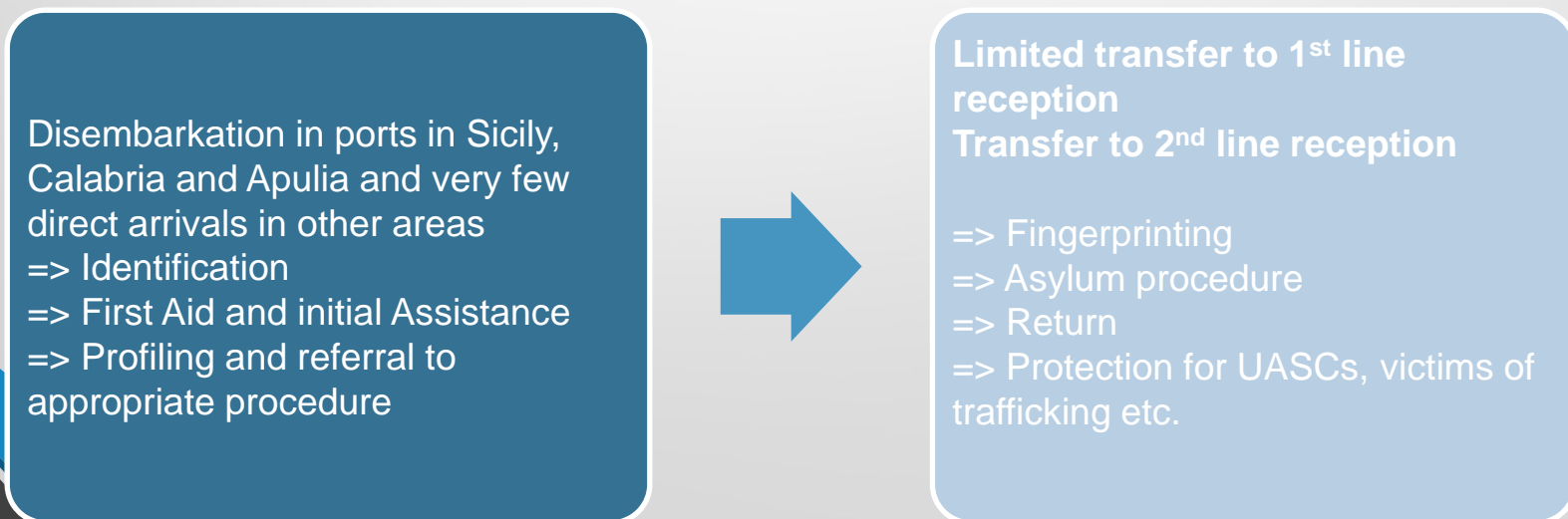
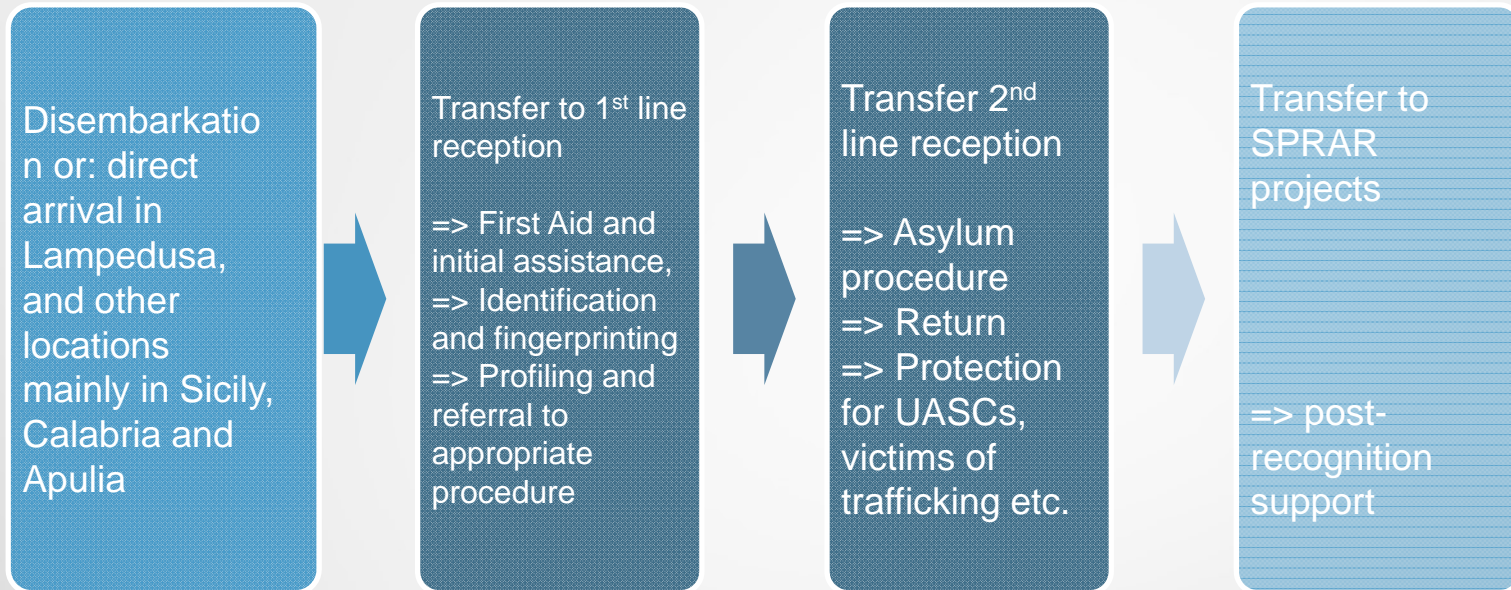
2. (...)

⇒ Extension of info-services as Art. 11 par. 6, in all areas of sea arrivals

⇒ UNHCR taking a training and supervisory role on NGOs



## Reception: Lampedusa model and Mare Nostrum



# Key issues at disembarkation

- The size of arrivals stretched already limited resources at the local level
- Most of the ports have not been equipped to respond to procedural and reception needs, in particular for such high numbers of migrants
- Nationals from Eritrea and Syria who refuse to be fingerprinted and abscond upon arrival
- Lack of/poor medical screening at some ports
- Delivery of a set of services hindered by lack of qualified interpreters
- Lack of reception capacity in initial reception facilities has obliged to undertake a set of procedures at the port or to postpone them, once migrants are transferred to reception facilities for asylum seekers, mostly CASs and SPRAR projects
- Psychological support for shipwreck survivors
- Lack of family tracing





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Thanks!