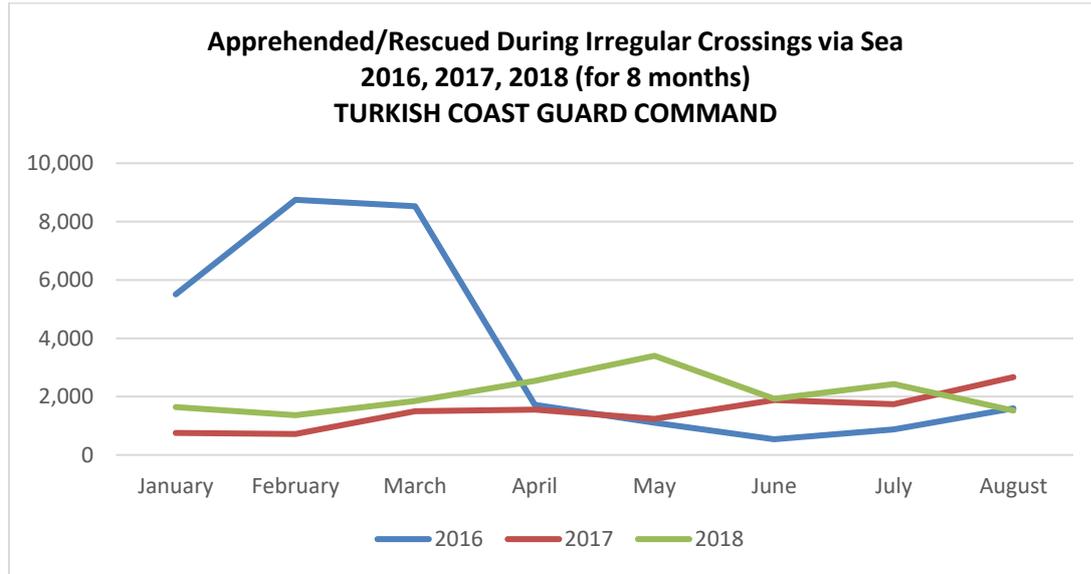


BULLETIN ON IRREGULAR CROSSINGS 8- AUGUST 2018

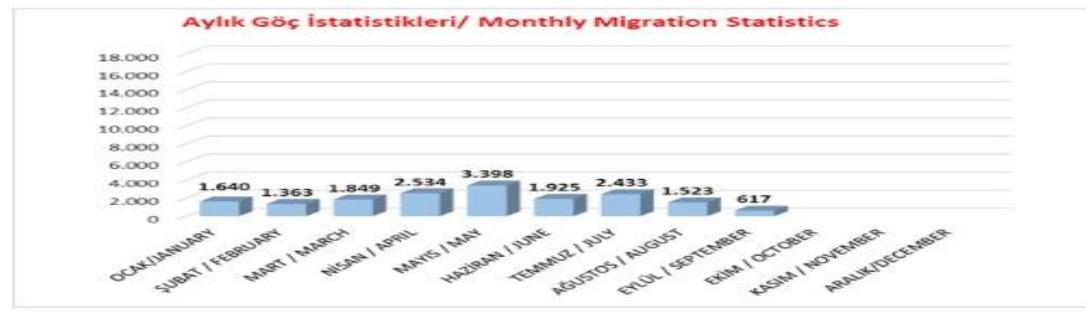
SUMMARY:

-9 Iraqi nationals including 7 children lost their lives and 4 people were rescued alive by Turkish Coast units in an irregular crossing incident which took place in Aydin Kuşadası in August 2018.

-Number of people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossings via sea by Turkish Coast Guard Command units in August 2018 is approximately 5% lower than the number in August 2016 and 43% less than the number recorded in August 2017.



- Number of people apprehended/rescued by Turkish Coast Guard units in August 2018 is 1523. There is a 37.5% decrease in this number compared to July 2018.

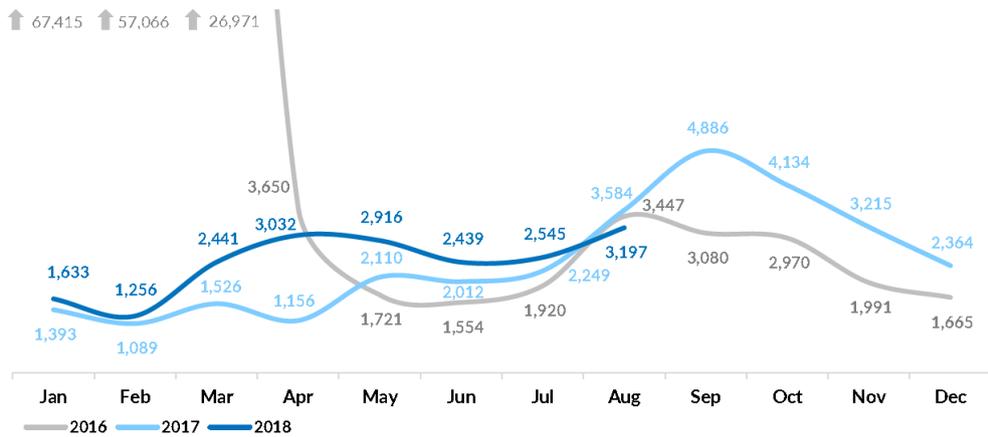


-For the first time in 2018, Afghans were the first largest group among the people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossings via sea by Coast Guard in August 2018. There is a sharp decrease (approximately 63%) in the number of Syrians, who were the second largest group in August, compared to their number in July 2018. The third largest group is Iraqis and fourth one is Palestinians in August 2018, as it was the case in July 2018.

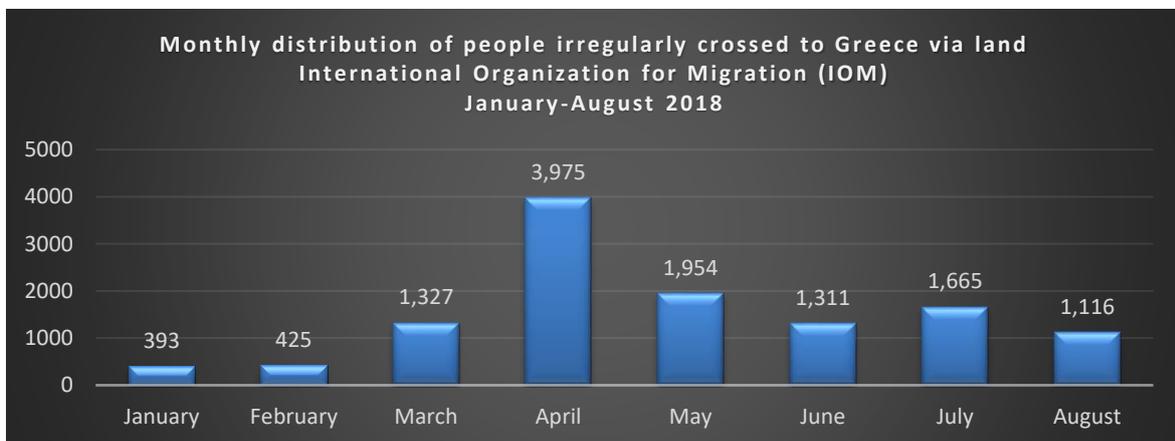
-When we look at the distribution of people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossings via sea, Çanakkale Ayvackı became the most frequented coast. This is the first time in 2018 a coast outside the borders of İzmir became the first coast.

- According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data, 3197 people irregularly crossed to Greek islands in August 2018. There is an approximately 20% increase in this number compared to the number in July 2018. The largest group among those who irregularly crossed to Greek islands is Afghans as it was the case in July 2018.

Monthly Arrivals 2016 to 2018

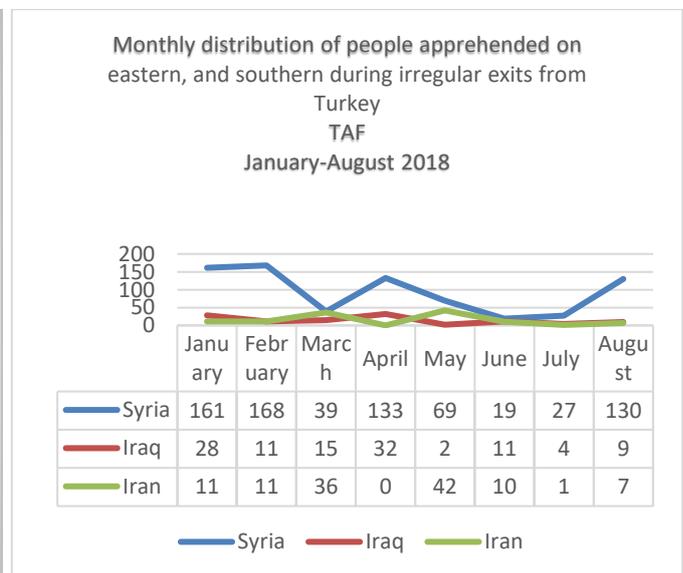
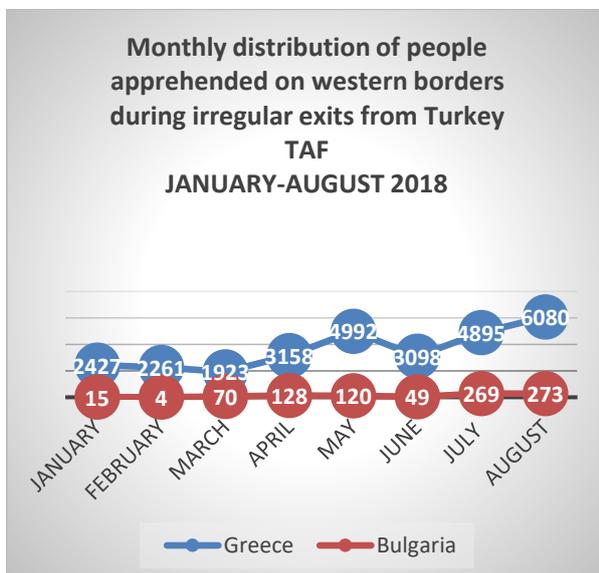


- According to International Organization for Migration (IOM) data, 1116 people irregularly crossed to Greece by land in August 2018. Distribution of the people who irregularly crossed to Greece by land in 2018 in terms of months is as follows:



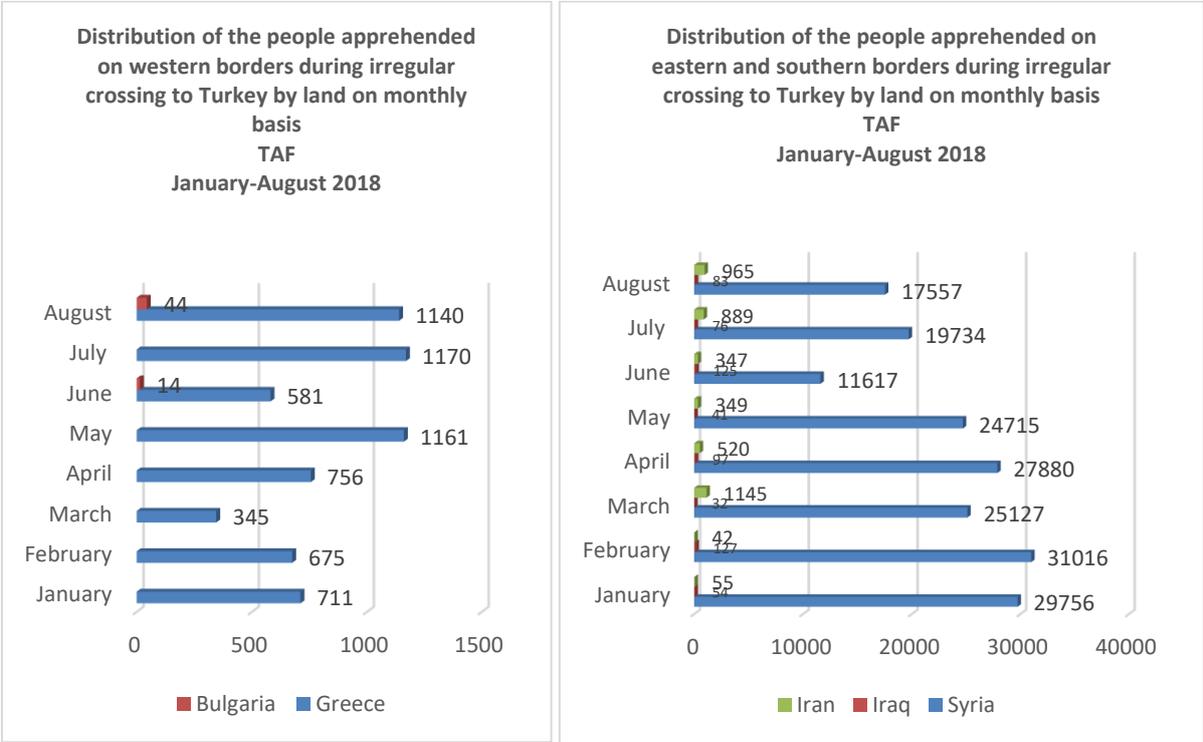
- According to daily published data by Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), the number of people apprehended on land borders during irregular exits from Turkey in August 2018 is 6499. 6353 of these people were apprehended on western land borders, while 146 of them were apprehended on eastern and southern borders.

Distribution of the people apprehended during irregular exits from Turkey on land borders in the course of 2018 in terms of months is as follows:



- Number of the people who were apprehended on land borders while irregularly entering to Turkey in August 2018 is 19789. 18605 of these people are the ones apprehended on southern and eastern borders while 1184 of them are apprehended on western land borders during irregular entry to Turkey.

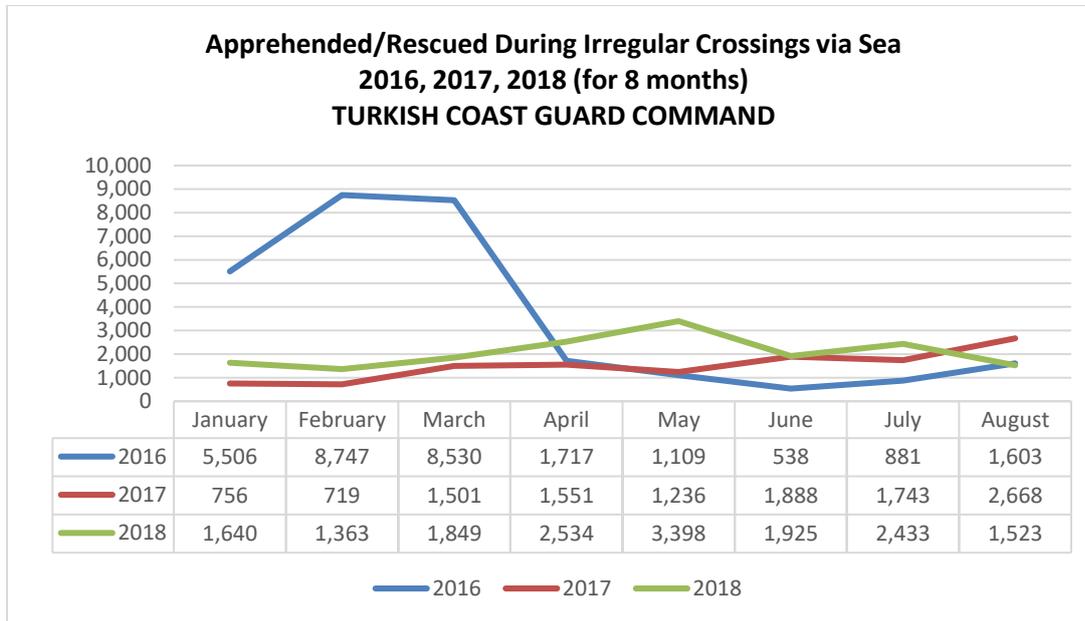
Monthly distribution of the people apprehended on land borders while irregularly entering to Turkey in 2018 is as shown in the following graphs:



- According to the news reports published on various dates, 8 people were pushed back from Bulgaria to Turkey after being beaten up by the Bulgarian police and their belongings usurped in August 2018.

ACCORDING TO THE DATA PROVIDED BY TURKISH COAST GUARD COMMAND;

Number of the people apprehended by Turkish Coast Guard Command units; in the relevant monthly period (January-August) 2016, 2017 and 2018 and their distribution in terms of months are as follows:



Graph 1: According to Turkish Coast Guard Command data distribution of the people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossings via sea in terms of months in January-August period of the years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

As seen in the graph, the number of those apprehended/rescued by Coast Guard units in August 2018 is lower than the numbers recorded in August in 2016 and 2017. The number in August 2018 is approximately 5% lower than the number in August 2016 and it is 43% lower when compared to August 2017.

Besides, the distribution of numbers of people apprehended/rescued in January-August 2018 in terms of months is as follows:

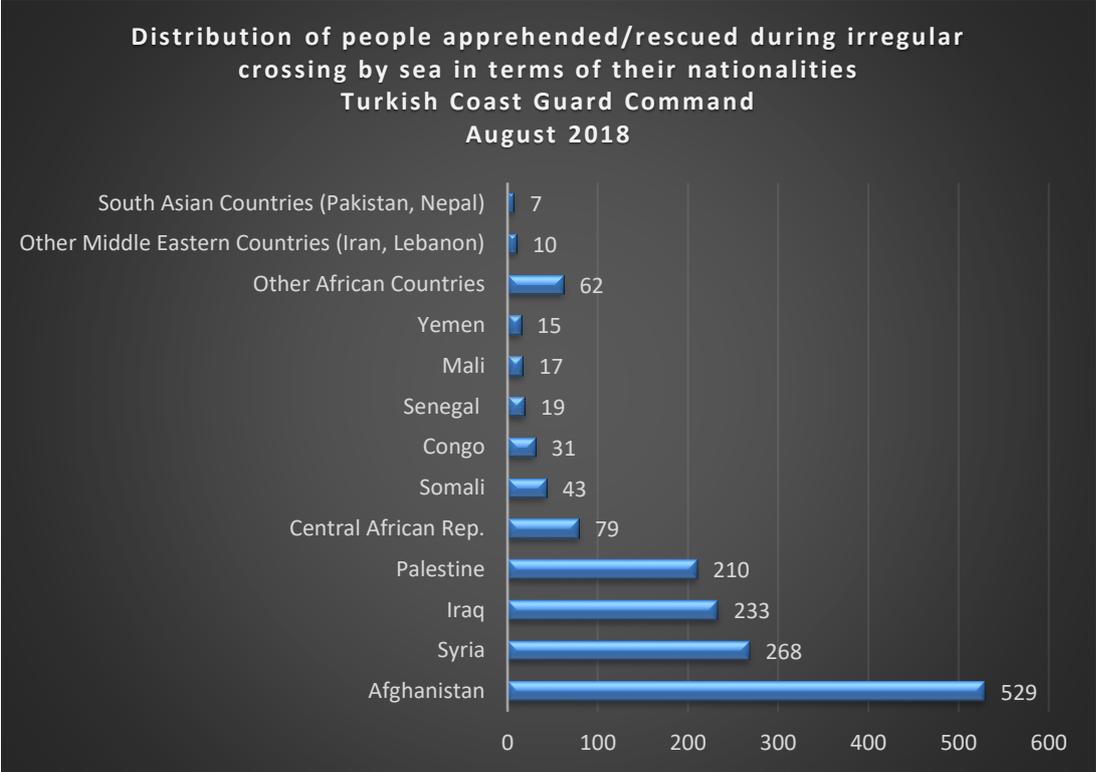


Figure 1: The figure was copied from the link http://www.sahilguvenlik.gov.tr/baskanliklar/harekat/faaliyet_istatistikleri/duzensiz_goc_istatistikleri.html on September 6, 2018.

As seen in the graphs above, the second lowest number regarding the people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossing by sea in 2018 is recorded in August 2018 (first one was in February).

In August 2018, 1523 people were apprehended/rescued by the Turkish Coast Guard units. The number of apprehended/rescued people started to rise after February and it decreased again in June and then the tendency turned upward in July. However, there is a 37.5% decrease in August 2018 compared to July 2018.

Distribution of the people apprehended/rescued by Turkish Coast Guard Command units in August 2018 in terms of their declared nationalities is as follows:



Graph 2: Distribution of the people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossing via sea in terms of their declared nationalities, August 2018.

August was the first time in the course of 2018, when the largest group among the people apprehended/rescued is not Syrians and it is Afghans. The number of Afghans apprehended/rescued in July more than doubled compared to the number in June 2018. The upward tendency in their numbers continued in August, however, the increase in August is not so significant with respect to the number in July 2018. Nonetheless, it is worth to notice that in spite of the overall decrease in the number of people apprehended/rescued the increase in the number of Afghans continues to rise. There is a sharp decrease in the number of Syrians (approximately 63%) in August compared to July. There was another sharp decrease of approximately 75% in June compared to May 2018, and it is possible to say that the one in August indicates a second sharp decrease in number of Syrians. There is a 40% decrease in number of Iraqis and 27% in the number of Palestinians compared to their number in July 2018.¹ However, this can be evaluated as a reflection of overall decrease in number of the people apprehended/rescued. In addition, the number of people from African countries including Central Africa has decreased gradually in July and August when compared to their number recorded in June 2018.

When we consider the sharp decrease in number of Syrians apprehended/rescued during irregular crossing via sea together with the decrease in number of Syrians who irregularly crossed to Greek islands, it is possible to say that this situation may be stemming from a number of recent developments that occurred in Turkey. For instance, economic problems became more visible in Turkey by August. Besides, it might also have made a discouraging impact that the apprehended Syrians during irregular crossings were being placed in the camps on

¹For a brief assessment regarding the sharp increase in number of Palestinians in July and regarding their being in the four largest groups among the people apprehended/rescued in August, please see <http://www.multeci.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/D%C3%9CZENS%C4%B0Z-GE%C3%87%C4%B0C5%9ELER-B%C3%9CLTEN%C4%B0-7-TEMMUZ-2018.pdf>

southern borders of Turkey and that some of them were subjected to obligation to give their signatures regularly in a certain city after being released from detention centers, where upon failing to fulfill the obligation they might be deported to Syria. Furthermore, as stated in previous issues of this bulletin, deteriorating living conditions in the camps in Greek islands with only one toilet for usage of every 70 people and extreme difficulties in accessing to health services, such as the system malfunction in transporting even the vulnerable children with untreatable health conditions in the islands to the mainland, may be affecting this decrease in number of Syrians. Moreover, the fact that the violent events especially in Moira camp in Lesvos have reached to an unbearable extent that they led the children in the camp to attempt suicide may be another reason behind this decrease.²

In contrast to the decrease in number of Syrians, the number of Afghans among both the people apprehended/rescued by Turkish Coast Guard and the ones who irregularly crossed to Greek islands has increased. It is not certainly known whether these Afghans are the ones who live in Turkey for a long time or the ones who have recently entered to Turkey irregularly. However, as highlighted by international organizations including United Nations the war in Afghanistan has intensified again³. Taliban has increased its attacks has started military operations to invade the places including Ghazni⁴ with high Shiite population, increasing the civilian casualties. These are the recent developments that might affect the increase of the number of Afghans. Moreover, Afghans living in Iran (hosting 3 million Afghans) have been started to be deported due to the recent economic instability in the country. Many Afghans also have lost their jobs because of this instability and therefore it is probable that Afghans in Iran may tend to leave Iran for Turkey and for Europe by irregularly crossing the land and sea borders.⁵

Regarding the decrease in the number of people coming from African countries, due to its relatively moderate refugee policy in contrast to anti-refugee policies of Italy and Malta, Spain became, in IOM's terms, leading destination for those who try to cross to Europe from African countries. In a report update dated August 31, 2018 on mixed migrants arrivals, IOM states that Spain hosts 42% of the arrivals to date and it continues "to receive seaborne migrants in August at a volume more than twice that of Greece and more than six times that of Italy."⁶ However, the recent developments that Spain has deported 116 people in a 24-hour time frame by relying on Morocco-Spain Readmission Agreement signed in 1992 and the fact that it has not allowed the rescue ship, Aquarius, which was active in Mediterranean Sea, to come abroad may be signifying a change in the policy with the pressure posed by the opposition parties.⁷

² <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/08/02/greece-children-blocked-health-care>

<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-45327658>

³ EASO COI REPORT AFGHANISTAN: SECURITY SITUATION – UPDATE, s. 20

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/afghanistan-security-situation-2018.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-45199904?>

⁵ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/afghan-migrants-iran-deported-weakening-economy-180807150227227.html>

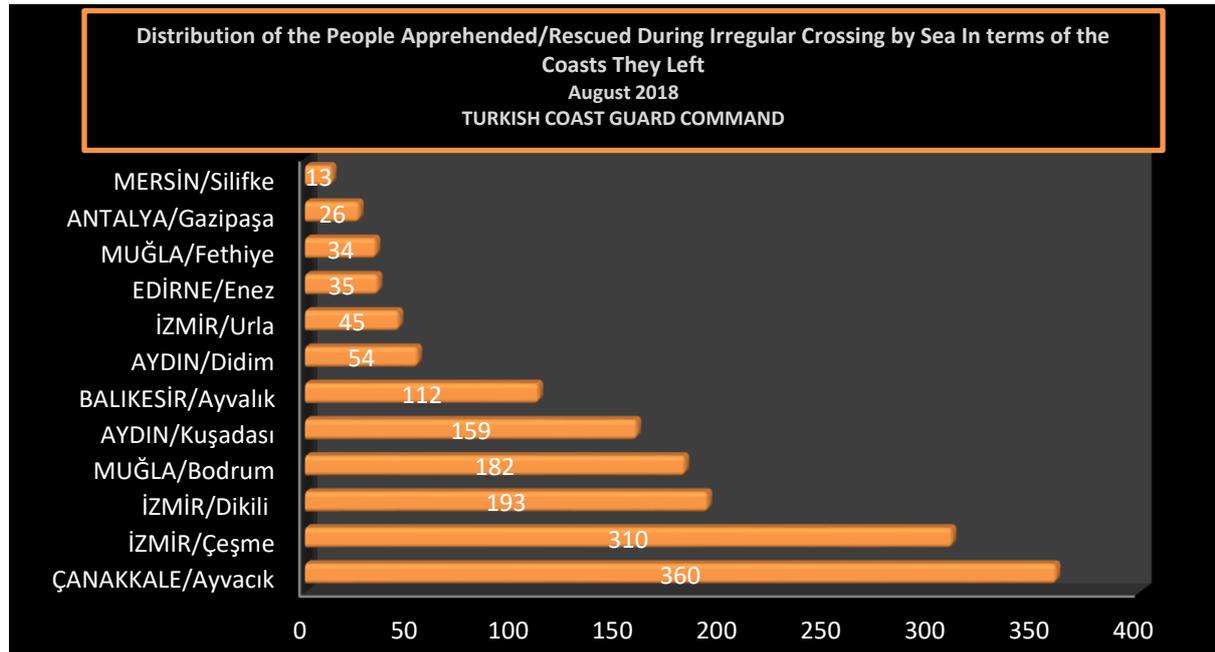
This news report dated August 7, 2018 states that 400 thousands Afghans were deported from Iran.

⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/report/spain/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-68098-2018-deaths-reach-1549>

⁷ ECRE Weekly Bulletin, 31 August 2018

https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/08/13/inenglish/1534146930_578482.html

Distribution of the people apprehended/rescued by Coast Guard in August 2018 in terms of the coasts from where they left the country is as follows:



Graph 3: Distribution of people apprehended/rescued by Coast Guard Command units during irregular crossing via sea in terms of the coasts from which they exit according to Turkish Coast Guard Command



Figure 2: According to Turkish Coast Guard Command data distribution of apprehended and rescued people in terms of the Aegean coasts in August 2018, International Organization for Migration (IOM).

When we look at the distribution of people apprehended/rescued during irregular crossings via sea, for the first time in the course of 2018, a coast outside the borders of İzmir, Çanakkale Ayvacak is in the first in the rankings of August. Aydın Kuşadası was among the first four coasts in July and it became the fifth in August while the number of people who left country from Bodrum has increased and its position at the rankings has risen up. As it was the case in July, one irregular crossing incident occurred on Edirne Enez coast which there were no

irregular crossing incidents recorded in the previous months of 2018.⁸ A similar pattern in the line with previous months was observed regarding the variety of vehicles. Distribution of the irregular crossing incidents in terms of the coasts in August is not in line with the distribution regarding the number of people apprehended/rescued. 15 incidents occurred on Muğla Bodrum coast which is at the fourth rank regarding distribution of people apprehended/rescued in terms of the coasts. 9 incidents took place on Çanakkale Ayvacık, 7 on İzmir Çeşme and Aydın Kuşadası coasts and 5 incidents occurred on İzmir Dikili.

In an irregular crossing incident leaving from Aydın Kuşadası coast 9 Iraqi people including 7 children lost their lives and 4 people were rescued by Turkish Coast Guard units in August 2018.

Note: According to Turkish Coast Guard Command data, 824 people were collectively apprehended by Gendarmerie, Police and Coast Command units in August 2018. There is a more than two times increase in this number compared to June (the number was 384). 16 smugglers were apprehended during these joint operations. 9 Turkish citizen organizers were apprehended by Coast Guard Command.

ACCORDING TO UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) DATA;

3197 people irregularly crossed to Greek islands via sea in August 2018. There is a 20% increase in this number compared to the number recorded in June 2018. The downward tendency observed in the number of people who irregularly crossed to Greek island after April 2018 turned into an upward trend again in July 2018 and this upward trend continues in August.

Distribution of the people who irregularly crossed to Greece via sea during 2018 and previous years 2016 and 2017 in terms of months is as follows:

Monthly Arrivals 2016 to 2018

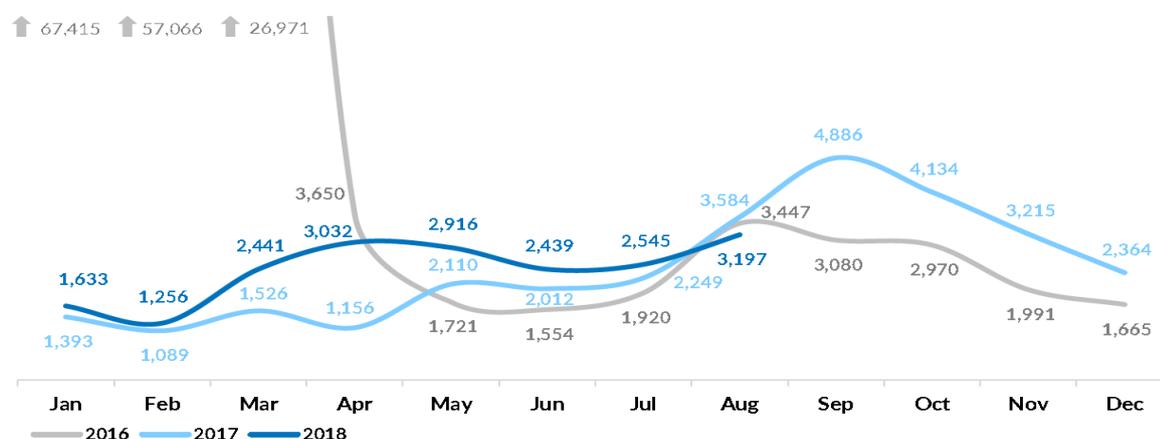
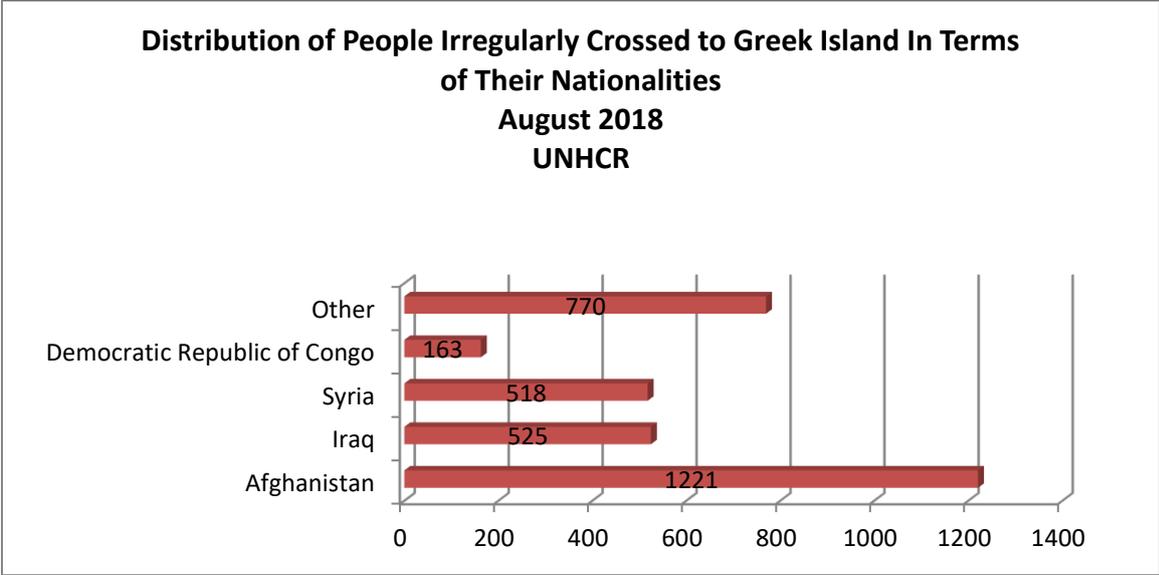


Figure 3: UNHCR data for the relevant months of 2016, 2017 and 2018, distribution of the numbers of irregularly crossed people via sea in terms of months
Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65946>

According to the numbers regarding July and August provided in UNHCR's Dashboards on the irregular crossings by sea in the Mediterranean route, it is observed that the first largest group among the people who irregularly crossed to Greek islands is Afghans in August as it was the case in July 2018. Unlike July, the second group is Iraqis and third one is Syrians. Their graphical distribution is as follows:

⁸ For a brief assessment about this coast please see: <http://www.multeci.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/D%C3%9CZENS%C4%B0Z-GE%C3%87%C4%B0C5%9ELER-B%C3%9CLTEN%C4%B0-7-TEMMUZ-2018.pdf>

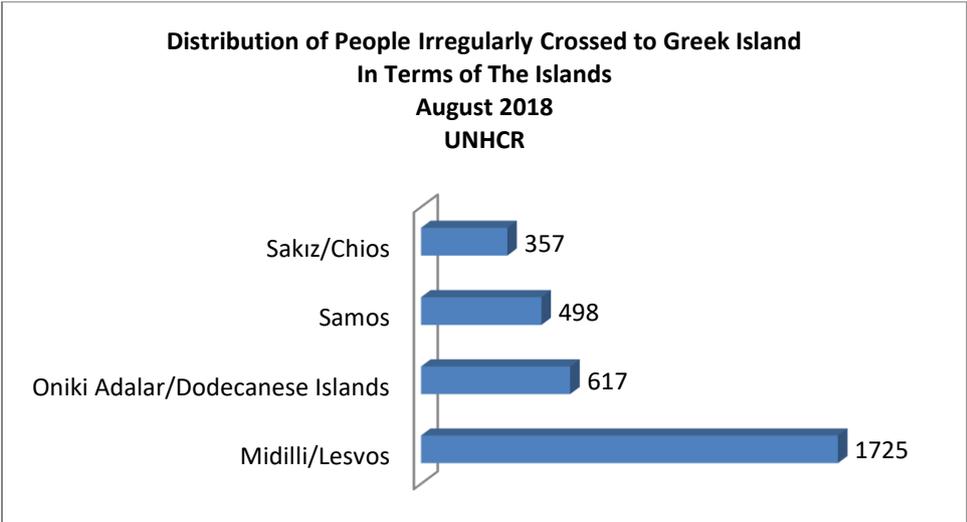


Graph: Distribution of people who irregularly crossed to Greek islands in terms of their nationalities

Source : <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/65159>
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

As previously mentioned in the part related to Turkish Coast Guard Command data, there has been a steady increase in the number of Afghans who irregularly crossed to Greek island since June 2018. Contrary to this, although high numbers of Syrians were recorded in March, April and May, a sharp decrease was observed in this number after that period. In spite of a slight increase in July, there is no change in this downward tendency in the number of Syrians. As stated previously, the decrease in number of Syrians among both the people apprehended by Coast Guard on the Turkish side and the people who irregularly crossed to Greek islands may be stemming from, along with the other factors such as people apprehended by Turkish authorities being taken to the camps in southeastern part of Turkey.

Distribution of the people who irregularly crossed to Greek islands in August 2018 in terms the islands is as follows:

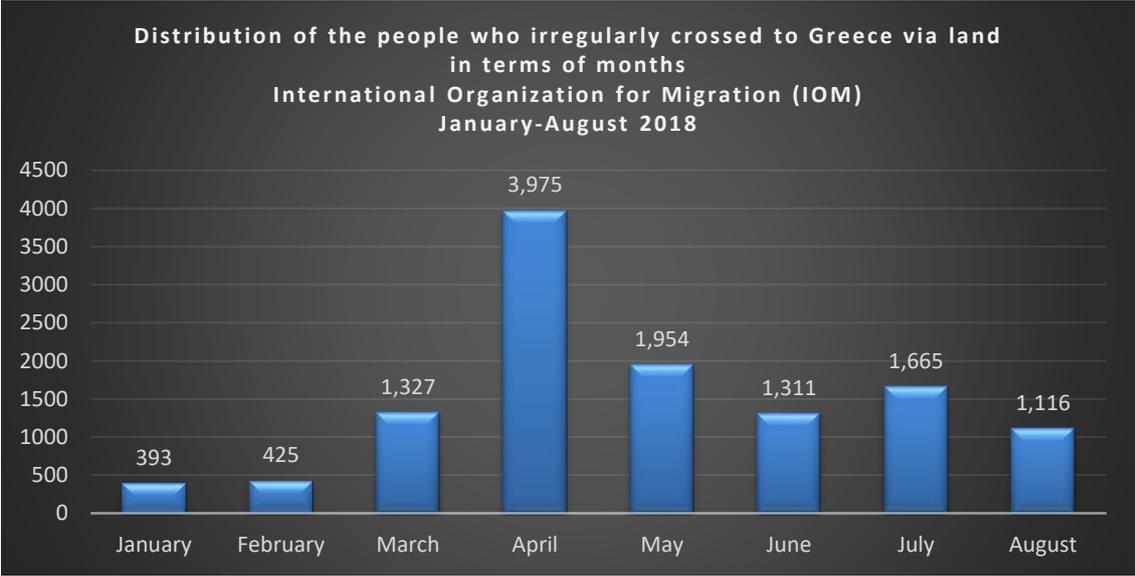


Graph 5: According to data provided by UNHCR through monthly published Dashboards, distribution of the people who irregularly crossed to Greece via sea in terms of the islands they arrived in

Source: Greece Sea Arrivals Dashboards July 2018 and August 2018
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/65159>
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65946>

Note: According to the numbers provided in press releases by International Organization for Migration (IOM) about the migrant arrivals to Europe through Mediterranean route, 1116 people irregularly crossed to Greece

by land in August 2018. Distribution of the people who irregularly crossed to Greece by land throughout the year 2018 in terms of months is as follows:



Graph 6: Distribution of the people who crossed irregularly to Greece via land in January-August 2018 according to IOM data
Source: <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-74501-deaths-reach-1586>

In July 2018 issue of IOM’s report titled as “Mixed Migration Flow in The Mediterranean” indicates that 852 people in total were apprehended by Bulgarian police between January and July 2018. 20% of them (170 people) were apprehended on entry from Turkey.⁹ 122 people were registered on entry from Greece to Bulgaria.

The graphs provided in the report regarding the number of people apprehended on borders of Bulgaria and inside the country are as follows:

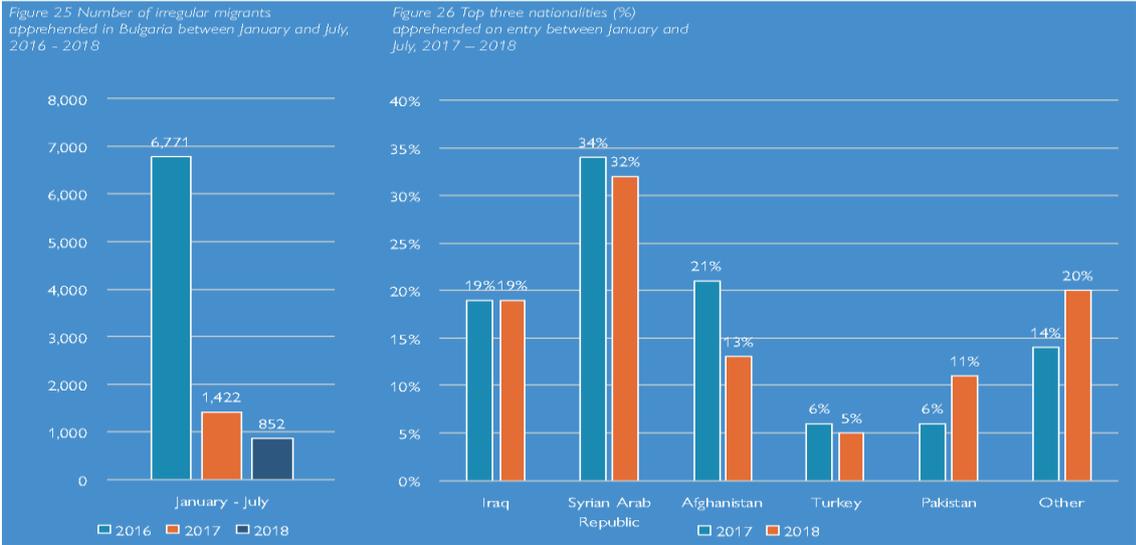


Figure 4: International Organization for Migration: Distribution of people apprehended inside Bulgaria and on entry to Bulgaria between January and July in terms of years and nationalities
Source: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/mediterranean_dtm_201807.pdf

⁹https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/mediterranean_dtm_201807.pdf, s.24

Same report states that 108 people irregularly crossed to Cyprus (Southern Cyprus) in January-July 2018 and all of them declared their nationality as Syrian.¹⁰

The graphs regarding Cyprus data in the report are as follows:

Figure 23 Arrivals in Cyprus, 2016 - 2018

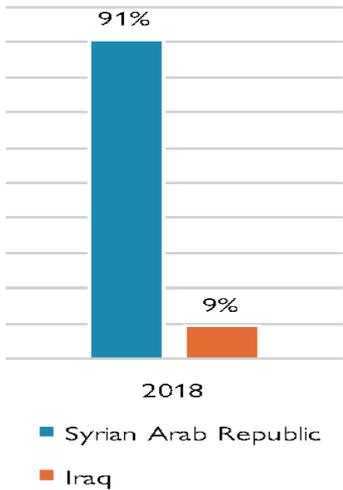


Figure 24 Nationality breakdown (%) of registered arrivals in 2017 and 2018

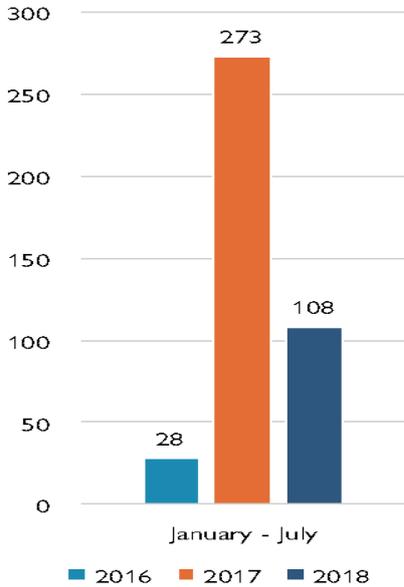


Figure 5: International Organization for Migration: Distribution of people who irregularly crossed to Cyprus and registered there in 2018 in terms of their nationalities and distribution of numbers of people between January and July 2016-2018 in terms of years.

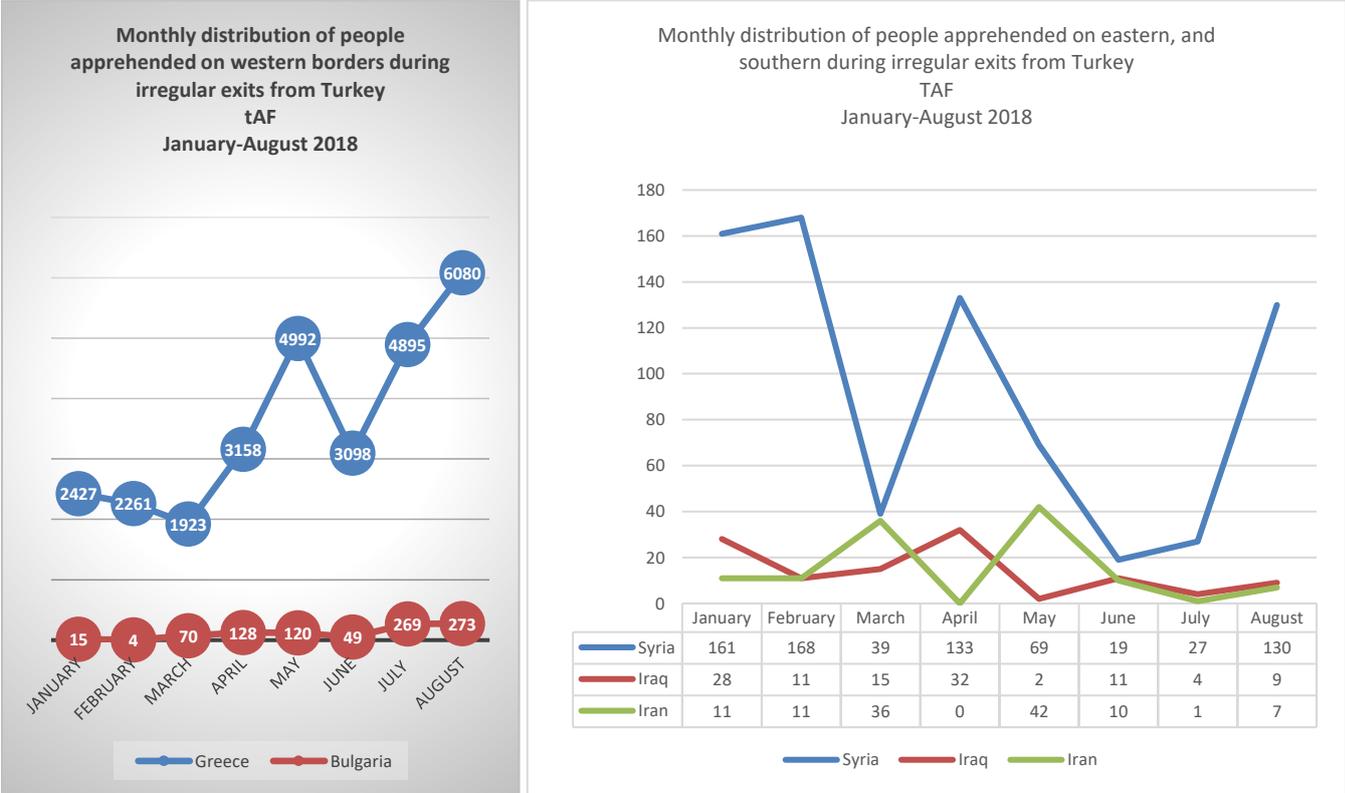
Source: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/mediterranean_dtm_201807.pdf

THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE APPREHENDED WHILE IRREGULARLY CROSSING THROUGH LAND BORDERS ACCORDING TO TURKISH ARMED FORCES (TAF-TSK) DATA:

According to daily published data by the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), **6499 people in total were apprehended while trying to irregularly cross to Greece, Bulgaria, Syria, Iraq, Iran via land borders in August 2018. 6353 of these people were the ones apprehended during irregular exit from Turkey through western land borders, while 146 of them were apprehended on eastern and southern land borders.** There is a 23% increase in number of people apprehended on western land borders when compared to the number in July 2018 and the number recorded in August is the highest number in 2018. Number of the people apprehended on southern and eastern borders is 4 times higher than the number in July 2018.

¹⁰ [ibid], 23.

Distribution of the people apprehended by Border Units during irregular crossings by land in terms of the country they were trying to cross in January-August 2018 is as follows:



Graph 7: According daily data provided by TAF distribution of the people apprehended between January and August 2018 on western, southern and eastern borders during irregular exits from Turkey in terms of the countries they were trying to reach to

The number of people apprehended during irregular crossing to Greece by land on western borders decreased in June 2018. After this decrease an upward tendency was observed through July and August. The highest number is recorded in August between January and August 2018. There was a sharp increase in number of the people who try to cross irregularly to Bulgaria in July compared to June. This upward tendency continues in August even though there is not a significant difference between the numbers of July and August. As mentioned in the previous issues of this bulletin, this situation may be stemming from the deteriorating conditions such as restrictions on freedom of movement in Greek islands which push people to cross directly to the mainland. In addition, people may tend to cross to central European countries by following the alternative Balkan routes¹¹ which are apparently developed as a response to closure of the borders on Balkan route to refugees in 2016.

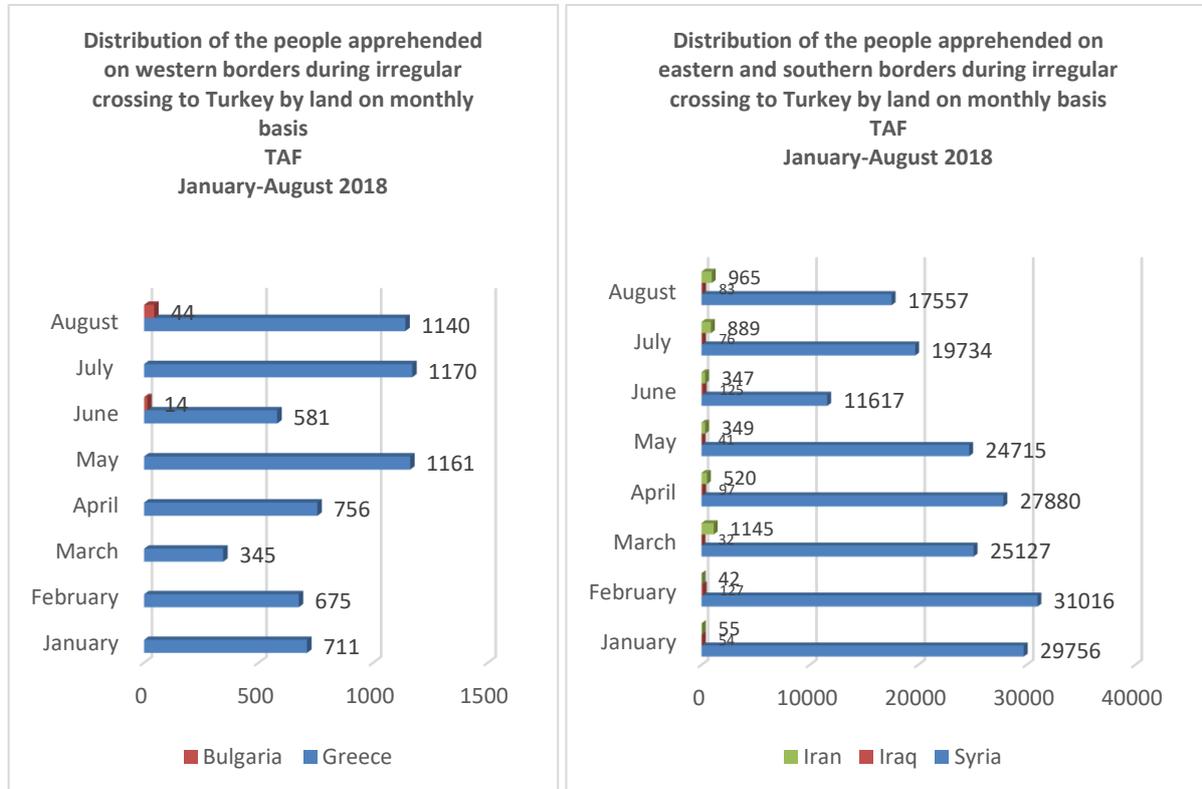
There was a sharp decrease in number of the people apprehended on southern land borders while trying to irregularly cross to Syria in between April and June. Following this, it is observed that there is a sharp increase in this number in August. However, it is hard to observe that there is a regular tendency regarding the numbers of people apprehended during irregular crossings on eastern and southern borders.

19789 people were apprehended while irregularly crossing to Turkey from the countries with which Turkey shares land borders in August 2018. 18605 of these people were the ones apprehended during irregular crossing on southern and eastern land borders. The remaining 1184 people were apprehended on western land borders while irregularly entering to Turkey. There is a 10% decrease in the number of the people who were apprehended on entry to Turkey on eastern and southern borders compared to July 2018. There is no significant difference between the numbers of the people apprehended on western borders in July and August.

¹¹ <https://www.dw.com/en/migrant-deaths-in-croatia-highlight-alternative-balkan-route/a-45054897>
 The news report at the link includes a map of the new Balkan routes developed as an alternative to the “Balkan route”. It states that 10000 people have reached to Bosnia-Herzegovina through these new routes and bodies of the people who lost their lives because of the harshness of the route were found in Croatian territories.

Nonetheless, as observed for the first time in June that people were apprehended on entry to Turkey from Bulgaria, there were 44 people apprehended on this border in August.

Distribution of these people apprehended by Border Units during irregular entrance to Turkey in January-August 2018 in terms of the country where they were coming from is as follows:



Graph 8: According to daily published data by TAF, distribution of people apprehended during irregular entrance to Turkey on southern, eastern and western land borders between January and August 2018 in terms of the country they were coming from

There is no significant difference between the numbers of the people apprehended on western borders in July and August. As mentioned in the previous issues of this bulletin, this situation may be stemming from the fact that people return back to Turkey by reversing the Balkan route due to the rising racism in European countries, intensified security on borders and enforcement of anti-refugee policies. Besides, for the second time in 2018, in August there are people apprehended on irregular entry to Turkey from Bulgaria. ***In addition, national press reported cases of people who were pushed back from Bulgaria to Turkey in August as it was the case in July. According to a news report published on August 1, 2018, 5 Iraqi people were pushed back to Turkey by Bulgarian police after taking their belongings by force and beating them. These people were apprehended by Turkish Gendarmerie in Kırklareli.¹² According to another news report dated August 11, 2018, 2 Pakistanis and one Afghan were pushed back by Bulgarian police in the same manner.¹³***

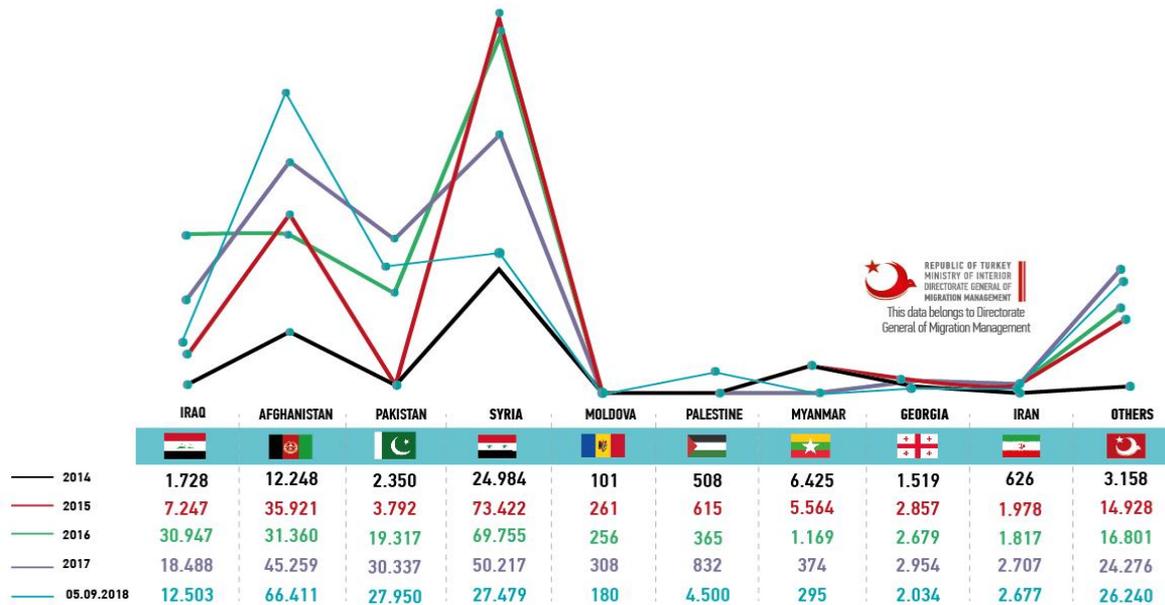
There was a significant increase in the number of people apprehended while entering to Turkey from Syria in July right after the noticeable decrease in this number in June. This was probably a reflection of recent developments such as preparations for a military operation to Idlib. There is a slight decrease in this number in August. This may be a result of the safety zones established in Syria and tightened border controls. High numbers of people apprehended on Turkish-Iranian border while irregularly entering to Turkey were recorded in spring months and following this there was a downward trend in these numbers. However, the trend turned upward again in July 2018. As stated previously in the part related to Turkish Coast Guard data, this may be stemming from the increasing economic instability in Iran and the war in Afghanistan.

¹² <https://www.haberturk.com/kirklareli-haberleri/62525506-avrupa-hayali-dayak-ve-gaspla-bittibulgar-polisinin-darp-edip-geri-yolladigini-iddia#>

¹³ <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/bulgaristana-gecmek-isteyen-53-kacak-yakalandi-40925381>

Turkish Armed Forces data regarding the people apprehended during irregular crossing on land borders are as stated in the previous pages and the statistics published by Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management regarding the irregular migrants apprehended in Turkey, including the numbers recorded in August 2018, are as follows:

DISTRIBUTION OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS BY CITIZENSHIP BY YEAR



MONTHLY AND CUMULATIVE TOTALS OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS IN 2018

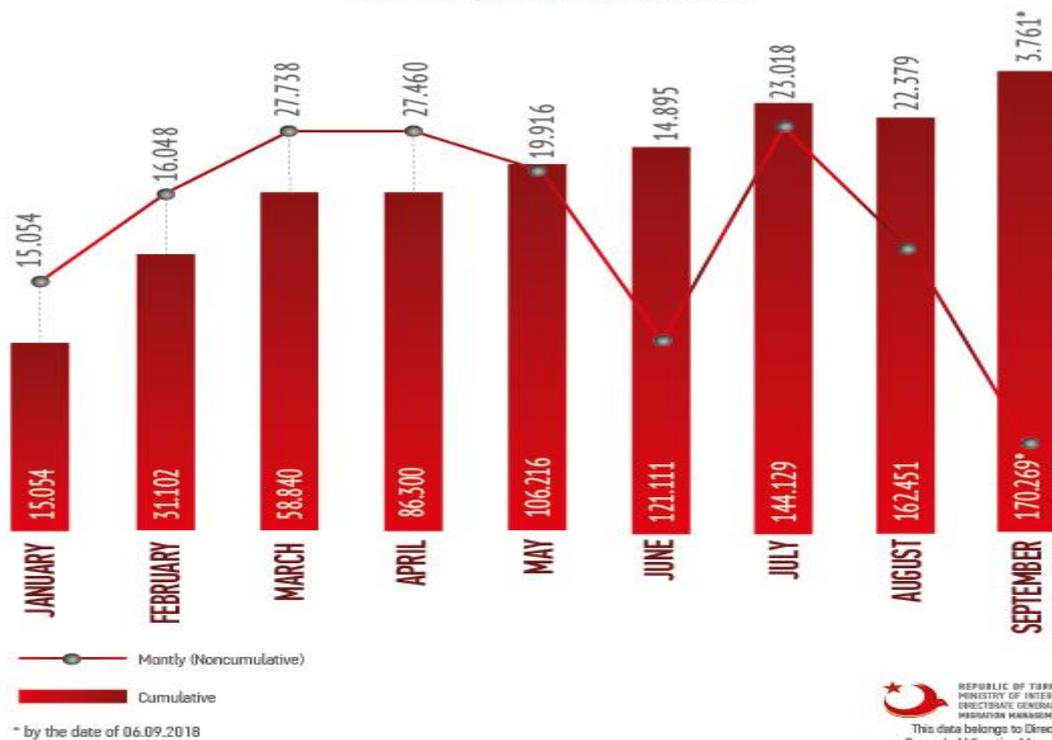


Figure 6: Directorate General of Migration Management, graphs related the apprehended migrants in Turkey
Kaynak: http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/duzensiz-goc_363_378_4710_icerik