Analysis of bilateral asylum flows and policy response to asylum migration

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INTRODUCTION

In the new global economy, migration has become a central issue both in economy and politics. In particular, the asylum crisis that has been caused by the Syrian exodus has received considerable critical attention. The topic of refugees and asylum seekers; or migration in general, has been studied by many researchers by using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The inadequacies and inefficiencies of the European asylum system revealed by the recent asylum crisis, coupled with the constant debate on immigration, have heightened the need for reform. Recent trends in migration, have led to a proliferation of studies attempting to explain these migration flows.

What we know about the factors that influence the direction and volume of bilateral asylum flows is largely based upon empirical studies that investigate these flows by analyzing the socioeconomic and political circumstances in origin and destination countries. Yet, along with the substantial increase in asylum demand over the last three decades, there is an increasing concern over how to handle these demands. To date, there has been little agreement on how to develop a more efficient asylum system to handle the increasing demand despite less willingness and limited capacity of developed countries to host large masses of refugees. The issue has grown in importance in the light of recent asylum crisis, especially the Syrian exodus as a result of the civil war. The issue of asylum policy has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of migration. Most of the studies in the field of migration have only focused on migration in general rather than asylum seekers and refugees. Yet, although much of the research up to now has been descriptive in nature, there has also been some quantitative analysis on the topic.

Although refugees and asylum seekers are a class of migrants, there are key aspects that differentiates them from other migrants. The main difference between refugees and other migrants is that their migration is primarily motivated by war and oppression. There are also other differences including, but not limited to, implications on migration policies, economic consequences and differences in public opinion. The issue of refugees and asylum seekers has received considerable attraction and especially in Western countries due to controversies on asylum policies. In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on refugees, asylum seekers, asylum policy and other related socioeconomic and political factors. Factors to be influencing bilateral asylum flows and evolution of asylum policy have been explored in several studies.

The structure of the paper is as follows: Part I which consists of 4 chapters of different topics related to asylum migration, is a revision of the literature; Part II is based on empirical data analysis based on the statistics on asylum migration; and Part III discusses the findings of the empirical experiment findings on bilateral asylum flows. Finally, the conclusion gives a brief summary and critique of the findings, along with some solutions discussed in the literature.

PART I – LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 1 - Development of the international refugee regime

Seeking asylum from persecution has a long history that consists of religious oppression, war and colonization. In order to understand the foundations of the refugee regime, a brief history on the development of the international refugee regime is discussed in Hatton (2012). The evolution of the international refugee regime as we know today has its roots in Europe, primarily due to the consequences of the displacements in the aftermath of First World War on account of newly established or 're-configured' states yearning to form ethnically more homogenous populations. Correspondingly, these homogenization policies resulted in millions of refugees on a scale that has never been witnessed before. In order to respond to these humanitarian crises, the High Commissioner for Refugees was appointed by United Nations in order to assist the large number of displaced populations that were exiled from their homelands. Hence, this initiative generated an official refugee status, consisting of issuing identity certificates for those who had become stateless; moreover, negotiating the exchange, repatriation and resettlement of refugees.

Despite international conventions with the purpose of resettling exiles, there was growing resistance to policies regarding the legal status of refugees and settlement provision as a response to worsening global economic conditions. As the Second World War created an even more severe refugee crisis, in 1943, the United Nations established the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, followed by the establishment of International Refugee Organization in 1947. The United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was agreed in Geneva in 1951, becoming the most influential legal instrument governing refugee policy and it is still considered as the essential source of policy towards asylum seekers and refugees.

The clause (Article 1(A2)) from the Convention (UNHCR) defines a refugee as someone 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."

In addition, "non-refoulement clause" (Article 33 (1)) states that:

"No Contracting State shall expel or return ('refouler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."

These provisions laid foundations of asylum policy until now. 'Non-refoulement clause' entails that "a person arriving on the territory or at the border of a state must be given access to a procedure to determine his/her status. Refugee status must be determined on a case-by-case basis, according to the somewhat subjective criterion of Article 1 without limit to the number and under Article 31 of the Convention "illegal entry or presence in the country is not influential on determination process or final decision of that process (Hatton, 2012)."

The 1951 Convention was initially restricted to circumstances occurring in Europe before 1950. Later on, UNHCR expanded its sphere of influence outside of Europe. Initially in early Cold War era, resettlement was more of a concern rather than repatriation. Nevertheless, as various conflicts in Asia and Africa were ensued by other conflicts in Middle East and Latin America, worldwide flow of refugees increased steeply until 1992, peaking at 800 000 due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and fall of Berlin. After a period of decline, the numbers started to increase again in 2000s as a response to the Yugoslavian war. Following the Arab Spring, Syrian civil war, asylum flows peaked at in 2015, when 1.8 million migrants crossed the Mediterranean and the Aegean (Hatton, 2017). While the number of asylum applications had substantially increased; developed countries with limited capacities to host substantial number of refugees became more reluctant and restrictive to provide asylum, started an ongoing debate on how to handle substantial upsurges in asylum inflows, and how a policy reform may be implemented.

CHAPTER 2 - Current trends on refugees and asylum seekers

Recent upsurges in asylum flows and persisting problems generating refugees in developing nations of the world heightened the need to understand the underlying factors behind these refugee flights. Numerous studies have attempted to explain these forced migration flows by using several different methods. An influential study in this field is Hatton (2017), focusing largely on asylum seekers and refugees who applied for asylum in developed Western countries. A 2017 study by Hatton updated and compiled the previous studies on this matter (see Hatton, 2012), considering the recent asylum crisis and other related literature on migration. In his analysis on asylum applications, Hatton (2017) identifies key influences that drive asylum flows and the effects of asylum policies.

2.1 – Causes of refugee displacement (push effects in origin countries)

Different authors worldwide have studied forced displacement by measuring the stock of refugees, or the flows and changes in the stock. In order to analyze "push" effects, which are the underlying factors that drive displaced persons from their origin countries; an earlier study conducted by Davenport, Moore and Poe (2003) implied the fundamental role of conflict and persecution on refugee displacement by: "the stock of displaced persons could be explained mainly by genocide, civil war, dissident conflicts, and political regime transitions." With this in mind, violence and oppression is not only limited to war, and can

also originate from human rights abuses and absence of the rule of law. Some observers attest that "countries with fragile political institutions, particularly those in transition, are more prone to civil conflict than those that are more settled (Gates et al, 2006; Goldstone et al, 2010)."

There is a trade-off between leaving and fighting, and desire to escape and the ability to do so. Especially in the case of authoritarian regimes, repressive policies can prevent departure. Furthermore, a paper by Schmeidl (1997) implies that "most significant variables that explain the stock of refugees [...] were those representing armed conflict, especially civil wars, genocide and political oppression." The study suggests that the consequences of conflict usually outweigh the underlying causes of violence. The same study also argues that "intervening factors such as poverty, population density, geography etc. were also not significantly influential unless they were related with a degree of conflict." What is more, another study conducted by Davenport et al (2003) and Moore and Shellman (2005) also suggest that "conflict, genocide and protest were the most significant variables along with some role for political transitions towards democracy." Along the same lines, Moore and Shellman (2006) also found that "civil war, dissident terror and government violence increases the number of refugees relative to the number of internally displaced." A later study by Moore and Shellman (2007) by examining the direction of refugee flights, indicated that "refugees move to places that are free of conflict, where incomes are higher, and the costs of transit are lower." They also pointed out that effects of conflicts in neighboring countries and costs of migration as influential factors. Upon studying the persistence of displacements, Melander and Oeberg (2006) also argued that "the flows tend to decrease when those most able or willing to move have left. [...] Outflows are reduced by regime transition in the origin country but increased by regime collapse." Hatton (2009) also suggested that "economic conditions in origin countries is also an important factor, as GDP per capita in the origin country had a negative effect on refugee displacements and on asylum flows to the developed countries."

2.2 - Factors influencing the choice of asylum seekers as destination country (pull effects in destination countries)

The factors that make a destination country to be considered attractive for an asylum demand can be considered as 'pull' effects. They are primarily high incomes, employment prospects and relevant asylum policies in the destination country. Some studies highlight that existing migrant stock in destination country is also an important factor. Earlier studies in literature based on interviews with asylum seekers find "that their choice of destination is determined by the presence of friends and relatives, while asylum policies and labor market conditions are of secondary importance (Havinga and Boecker, 1999; Robinson and Segrott, 2002; Day and White, 2001.)" Together, these studies provide important insights into understanding triggering factors of bilateral asylum flows. The key drivers of asylum

flows and their significance towards destination countries are empirically analyzed in detail in the test results of Hatton (2017) in the section 2.4.

On one hand, some argue that genuine refugees who suffer from persecution will migrate at all costs, and that stricter policies would only make it difficult for them without a significant diminishing effect against the flow. On the contrary, others including most governments, claim that lenient asylum policies would uncontrollably increase asylum inflows. Earlier studies that analyzed cross-country correlations generally found "an inverse relationship between changes in applications and increases in policy restrictiveness (Vink and Meijerink, 2003)." In line with previous studies (Hatton 2009, Neumayer 2004, Thielemann 2006), Hatton (2017) findings indicate that the truth is in between two contrasting opinions concerning policy effect: policies are observed to have significant deterrent effect, however the "push effects" such as war, violence, human rights abuse, and economic conditions in origin countries overshadow the deterrence effect of asylum policies implemented in destination countries.

2.3 – Asylum policy and its effects on asylum flows

The increasing numbers of asylum applications in contrast with finite capacity to host large masses of refugees and less willingness of European countries to provide asylum led to more restrictive asylum policies in the developed world, which is also described as 'policy backlash'. While all the countries of OECD had agreed to the Refugee Convention, the Convention did not entirely rule out all means for governments to deter asylum applications. There are three main instruments that enable governments to issue policies in order to deter asylum applications. They are divided in three categories: "policies that limit access to the territory, the procedures to determine whether an applicant qualifies for refugee status, and those that represent welfare conditions during and immediately after processing (see Hatton and Moloney 2015)."

In order to establish a degree of reconciliation regarding policy, European countries established Common European Asylum System for coordination, which introduced minimum standards in various dimensions of asylum policy such as qualification for refugee status, asylum procedures, reception conditions, determination of the state responsible for processing a claim, creation of Frontex agency to integrate and standardize border procedures. These were followed by foundation of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in order to exchange information, propagating best practice along with providing assistance for states that are challenged by more pressure. Whereas the process suggested convergence between states, most of the policy is still regulated at the national level.

Progressive increase of restrictions regarding asylum policies is obvious, yet the true motive behind governments implementing them is more ambiguous. In order to examine the underlying motives, it is necessary to understand the public opinion. It is generally accepted that public attitudes toward asylum seekers have exacerbated over time. While

there is possibility that the latter can be a mere consequence of increasing number of asylum applications, on the other hand it can also possibly be culminating from the perception on refugees and asylum seekers. Although most citizens empathize with refugees, at the same time they are strongly against illegal immigrants. Coupled with mass media influence displaying irregular migration of asylum seekers, "over time, the term 'asylum seeker' has become conflated with 'illegal immigrant' (Hatton, 2011, p.62)." Illegal border crossings on land and sea, illegally employed immigrants or those living on benefits, racism, xenophobia, and insecurity are among the factors that cause convergence between the two concepts. The effects of public opinion and political economic factors on asylum policies are discussed in following chapters.

2.4 – Analyzing applications for asylum (based on Hatton, 2017)

Different studies have evaluated asylum applications from the perspective of receiving countries in Europe and in other regions. Consequently, Hatton (2017) introduces a regression analysis in order to shed light on this matter by predicting the significance level of each influential factors mentioned in previous sections. The experiment conducted by Hatton (2017) is based on a sample from UNHCR database of first instance applications made in 19 destination countries from 48 countries over the years 1997-2014. The destination countries include 16 European countries plus Australia, Canada and the United States, and the origin countries are those that have generated the largest numbers of asylum applications since 2000.

The explanatory variables used in the test are those that have been examined in previous studies. They consist of 'push' effects in origin countries, 'pull' effects in destination countries, along with other variables such as policy. One different feature of this test from other studies and previous test on this matter (see Hatton, 2016, a) is that in this study, the author also incorporates three other policy-related variables. First is the total recognition rate, which is the share of applicants that is accepted as refugees or on other humanitarian grounds. Second is to control for the existence of a readmission agreement between a destination country and an origin country. Finally, the third is an index of the destination country's policy on immigration for employment, in order to test for possible substitution between migration channels.

2.4.1 – Empirical analysis of 'push' and 'pull' factors

In the first stage, Hatton (2017) explores the significance of each key drivers of asylum applications. The empirical test results on the key drivers of asylum applications are displayed in the annex (A2.4.1 – see Table 5, Hatton, 2017). The dependent variable used in this regression test is the log of the ratio of applications from an origin to a destination to origin country population.

To begin with, the first column in the test represents origin fixed effects and a dummy variable for each destination. The second column incorporates a dummy variable

for each year to observe trends over time, yet it is observed that it has very little effect on other coefficients. In the first two columns, the highly significant coefficient on 'log of migrant stock in destination/origin population' illustrates the prominent 'friends and relatives' effect', which is in line with most of the previous studies. The coefficient "implies that a 10% increase in the stock of immigrants would increase the flow of asylum applications by 2.3% (Hatton, 2017)." On the contrary, similar to the findings of previous studies, distance (reflecting the costs and difficulty of reaching a destination) is still an important factor. Even when the presence of the migrant stock is considered, distance is a negative and significant factor. The volume of applications observed to decline significantly with distance can mostly be attributed to "result of costs and risks associated with irregular migration (Hatton, 2016, a)." The other three column in the test incorporate fixed effects for every origin-destination dyad with the intention to fully absorb the effects on migrant stock and distance for each dyad. Although they indicate the large contribution of the migrant stock and distance to total variation, it is indicated that their effects on origin-country variables are marginal.

One of the most important findings of this study (Hatton, 2017), in line with previous literature (see Section 2.1), is that an increase of one point on the Political Terror Scale increases the number of applications by 20%. While the coefficient for civil liberties is positive and significant implying that one-point increase on the scale increases asylum applications by around 25%, coefficient on political rights is not significant. It is suggested that although political oppression may result in increased intention to flee, conversely it may also reduce the ability to leave the country. Likewise, civil war deaths are not significant, in a like manner, mostly because its effects are dominated by the other variables that reflect government failures and consequences of human rights abuses. The coefficient on origin country GDP per capita implicates that unfavorable economic conditions at home may incite asylum migration: with a 10 percent increase in GDP per capita coincides with 6 percent decrease in applications (Hatton, 2017)." Though, it is important to add that poverty may also possibly restrain the ability to migrate.

On the other hand, when 'pull' effects of destination country are analyzed, unemployment rates demonstrate the attractiveness of destination countries more accurately than GDP per capita. Yet, the unemployment effect is rather modest where a 3 percent decrease (differing from 4% in Hatton, 2016, a) in employment rate of destination country correlating to a 1 percent increase in asylum demand. The strong negative coefficient for policy index suggests that more restrictive asylum policies do have a deterrent effect on the number of asylum flows. Lastly, the regression in fifth column of the test excludes three destination countries outside Europe with the purpose of investigating whether the results depend on their inclusion. Hatton (2017) states, "evidently [they] do not, as the size and significance of the coefficients is little altered." To put it differently, the results differ very modestly even when non-European destination countries are excluded from the test.

2.4.2 – Empirical analysis of policy effects

In the second stage, the test results on the effects of asylum policies are explored (displayed in the annex A2.4.2 – see Table 6, Hatton, 2017). The author (Hatton, 2017) states, "introducing the policy index or its components with a one-year lag produces coefficients that are similar to those in A2.4.1 (Table 5, Hatton, 2017)." The regressions in this table include fixed effects for each origin country by each year, which entirely absorb origin country variables and their effects. Under these assumptions, "the use of origin-by-year fixed effects also absorbs any deflection effects of policy in one destination on applications in others (Hatton, 2017)."

To start with, the first column on A2.4.2 (Table 6, Hatton, 2017) shows that "the coefficients on the bilateral variables and the destination country variables, in particular the policy index, are little affected by the choice of fixed effects in comparison with second column of A2.4-1 (Table 5, Hatton, 2017)." Moreover, in second column of table A2.4-2 (Table 6, Hatton, 2017), the policy index is disintegrated into its three constituent parts. The policy coefficient on access to the territory and on the procedures on processing of asylum claims both have a strong negative coefficient which suggest significant effect, whereas the coefficient of welfare conditions is positive but not significant. The negative coefficient on policy illustrates that stricter asylum policy does have a significant deterrent effect. "A one-point increase in these indices reduces applications by 17% and 12% respectively. But the coefficient on the index representing welfare conditions for asylum seekers is insignificant (Hatton, 2017)." A possible explanation for this might be that probability of gaining settlement is the priority of asylum seekers. Hence, it could conceivably be hypothesized that no matter what hardships they face, asylum seekers will go through all it takes in order to get to the destination in the first place. In this regression which incorporates bilateral variables, both origin and destination country variables including three elements of asylum policy; the variation compared to previous test on key drivers of asylum applications, is insubstantial. These results match with those observed in earlier studies (Sections 2.1-3).

An alternative to measure the strictness of the refugee status definition process is to include the recognition rate. Using the recognition rate as a policy effect measurement is an ex-post approach beneficial to observe the effects of policy on asylum flows after their implementation. In the latter three columns of this test on policy, Hatton (2017) incorporates the overall recognition rate for asylum claims to each destination country, but not separately for each origin, and lagged by one year. The coefficient is positive however modest, where a 10-percentage point increase in the recognition rate is observed to increase asylum applications by 2 percent. The forth column in the test controls for the existence of a readmission agreement between origin and destination countries. "The coefficient is positive suggesting that readmission agreements are associated with an increase in applications although it is only significant at the 10% level […] [because] any reduction in

transit migration from other countries would not be captured by the bilateral dummy (Hatton, 2017)." The last column of the test (Hatton, 2017) controls for the restrictiveness of employment-based immigration policies in destination countries. The variable takes a positive and marginally significant coefficient. Since it is suggested that from 1997 to 2014, employment-based immigration policies became less restrictive, they did not add to the number of applications for asylum. "The effect is to reduce applications on average by 9% (Hatton, 2017)." To conclude, it is indicated that the weighted average of percentage changes amounts to a reduction of almost 30%. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the essential motive of asylum seekers is to obtain permanent settlement at any cost, which overshadows the deterrence effect of policies.

CHAPTER 3 - Public opinion and political economic factors on European asylum policies

3.1 – Public opinion

3.1.1 – Public opinion on migration in general

Up to the present time, there has been a widespread belief that adverse economic conditions negatively affect public opinion towards immigration due to rising unemployment, competition on labor market and fiscal repercussions. In the literature prior to Hatton (2016, b) there has been a substantial amount of research on overall trends of public opinion on immigration, however, there has been little discussion about shifts in public opinion as a response to changing economic conditions and other relevant macro-level shocks.

The studies preceding Hatton (2016, b) have reported that perceived economic, social, and cultural threats (or opportunities) are associated with public opinion on immigration. One of the most notable findings implies that "those with higher levels of education have more positive attitudes towards immigrants [...], which reflects the greater labor market competition faced by low-skilled workers (Scheve and Slaughter 2001)." Pursuing this further, other studies also indicate that "the education effect is stronger for workers in occupations that are most exposed to competition with low-skilled immigrants (Ortega and Polavieja 2012; Dancygier and Donnely 2012; Malhotra et. al 2013) and for countries with low average skill levels (Mayda 2006; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006)." Various studies also focused on concerns over the fiscal costs of immigration. A study conducted by Boeri (2010) implies that, "across European countries, actual and perceived fiscal burdens are correlated, and higher fiscal burdens are associated with more negative opinion." On the other hand, several studies, in particular those by political scientists, argue that "social and cultural values are more important in shaping immigration opinion than economic considerations (e.g. Citrin et al., 1997; Rustenbach 2010, Manevska and Achterberg 2013)." The explanation for one recurrent finding that attitudes being more negative towards non-white immigrants and those with different languages, cultures and religions are often linked to "perceived cultural concerns that are inferred from the effects on immigration opinion

of responses to questions on national identity and preserving national culture, attitudes towards personal safety and security, feelings of alienation, and positioning on the political spectrum (Hatton, 2016, b)." Thus, in order to identify the most influential factors affecting opinion on immigration, an analysis on the ESS 2002 by Card et al. (2012) engaged in differentiating between concerns over employment and fiscal repercussions, compared with those akin to social and cultural threats. Their findings indicated that "social and cultural threats are two to five times as important as economic concerns in explaining the variation in immigration opinion." The last example highlights the fact that views on immigration mostly reflects concerns over the society, rather than mere 'self-interest'. In addition, in experimental work, Sniderman et al. (2004) and Rydgren (2008) find that "negative shocks have the effect of 'mobilizing' opinion across a broad range of individuals, rather than 'galvanizing' only those who are initially predisposed against immigration." To recapitulate, opinions of individuals can change over the course of time not only within a particular group, but also possibly expanding on a larger scale as a society overall.

The research of Hatton (2016, b and 2017) confirms most of these findings of the previous literature. The public opinion data investigated by Hatton (2016, b) is based on European Social Survey (ESS) conducted in 20 countries; including years before and after the recession (2002 to 2014). The assessment of ESS results indicate that the two most influential variables shifting public opinion on immigration are the share of immigrants in the population and the share of social benefits in GDP. The results suggest that the countries that have a higher share of immigrants tend to have a more negative opinion, especially to questions concerning the scale of immigration. The negative opinion on immigration in countries with more developed welfare systems reflects concerns about consequences of immigration on the welfare system. The countries that were most negatively affected by the recession also tend to have a more negative public opinion on immigration, correlated with concerns over increasing budget deficits. It is also important to add that "these country level-effects are not particularly large, but they seem to affect different socioeconomic groups to much the same degree (Hatton, 2016, b)." Under these circumstances, it is observed that the mean scores declined only modestly upon the global financial crisis between 2008 and 2010, before recovering again in 2012.

While assessing macro-level effects on immigration opinion, Hatton (2016, b) regressed these results according to individual characteristics. The results indicate that "opinion becomes more negative throughout the age range but at a decreasing rate. [...] Being born in the country has a large negative effect, indicating that immigrants are more pro-immigration; moreover, being member of an ethnic minority has an additional positive effect (Hatton, 2017)." However, it is also important to note that Hatton (2016, b) findings indicate "there is no evidence that the immigrant stock effect is stronger in countries where the non-western share is larger. Thus, even though individual preferences clearly differ across different migrant sources, changes over time are driven by the total immigrant stock (Hatton 2016, b)." Furthermore, "being in the labor force (employed or unemployed) has a

negative effect, […] which would be consistent with concerns about job market competition or concerns of earners on tax implications of immigration. High (completed tertiary) education has a strong positive effect while mid-level (secondary) education has a smaller positive effect. Consistent with other studies, education is among the most important source of differences in immigration opinion, and the effects are large relative to those of other variables. […] Conditional on being in the labor market, the more educated the worker, the less he or she would fear competition from low-skilled immigrants (Hatton 2016, b)." The differences in public opinion on immigration are not only between personal characteristics, but also between countries. While 'North' and 'Middle' group countries illustrate mild trends, 'East' and 'South' group of countries exhibit greater fluctuations during crisis and some display downward trends. "Since the crisis affected European countries very differently, the ESS data indicated that the shifts in immigration opinion have been fairly modest on average across Europe, although the change has been more dramatic in countries where there is more concern about the economic benefit of immigration (Hatton, 2016, b)."

3.1.2 – Public opinion on refugees

It is also important to distinguish between opinion on refugees and opinion on immigrants in general. In 2002 and 2014 the ESS included a question specifically on refugees whether their government should be more generous or not in judging people's applications for refugee status. For the 14 countries (see Table 8, Hatton, 2017) there were substantial differences between countries and in change of opinion. For instance, while the anti-immigrant public opinion (in percentage points) on immigrants from different ethnic groups has increased in some countries such as Czech Republic (19.2), Ireland (12.4) and Switzerland (3.5); it decreased in most of other countries, especially Norway (-20.0), Germany (-18.7) and Austria (-17.3). In addition, it is indicated that the 18-country average decrease in anti-immigrant opinion correlates to 6.3 percentage points; and although slightly more negative, similar patterns are observed for anti-immigrant opinion for immigrants from poor countries (Hatton, 2017).

For public opinion specifically for refugees, the results also illustrate wide variety of opinion between countries. Hatton (2017) states, "On this measure, level of anti-refugee opinion ranges from more than 40% of respondents in Belgium, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands to less than 10% in Poland, Portugal and Sweden. Anti-refugee sentiment has declined in all 18 countries although with varying magnitudes and the country average of these declines is 14.7 percentage points. As a result; negative opinion towards refugees is now minority for every [European] country (see Table 8, Hatton, 2017)."

3.1.3 – The salience of immigration

Salience is defined as the issues that gain prominence in the press, media or popular debate which are "likely to take greater weight in the preferences of voters between party

platforms, even though the underlying attitudes have not changed very much (Hatton 2016, b)." Salience is important because reforming the asylum system, or immigration policy in general, essentially requires public support. Hatton (2017) accentuates the importance of salience by, "the preference of voters for more or less immigration will not gain political traction unless salience is sufficiently high to make it a political priority. […] By May 2015, the salience of immigration had reached unprecedented heights in Europe. It is often suggested that the migration crisis has shifted attitudes strongly against immigration. But this is largely a shift in salience rather than in preferences for more or less immigration. […] But if, as illustrated (see Table 10, Hatton, 2017), preferences over immigration (and especially over refugees) are not overwhelmingly negative then one should not expect a political and policy backlash. However, there is one dimension in which preferences are strongly negative – illegal immigration. Clearly, this is important for asylum policy as a large share of recent asylum seekers have entered the destination country without authorization (Hatton, 2017)".

3.1.4 – The salience of immigration and right-wing political parties

One may conclude that recession is the main cause of an overall negative opinion on immigration and the rise of right-wing populist parties in Europe. Yet, Hatton (2016, b) argues "there is no evidence of increasingly discordant opinions on immigration and, in the depths of the recession, the salience of immigration as a policy issue actually declined. Rather, it is more probable that the 'resurgence of right-wing parties' upon the recession is related to other reasons, such as loss of confidence in European Union. Nevertheless, as the recession subsided, "the concerns over immigration may gain renewed prominence (Hatton, 2016, b)."

The findings of recent studies for periods prior to the recession have lent support for the claim that surges in support for right-wing populism are associated with growing immigrant numbers. A key thing to remember is that "much of the resurgence in right wing populism has been […] predominantly in the countries least severely affected by the recession (Hatton 2016, b)." With this in mind, as demonstrated by previous studies by political scientists, "right wing populism appeals not only to those with nationalistic or xenophobic attitudes, but also to those with anti-establishment views and strong distrust of political institutions, which is reflected most sharply in Euro-skepticism (Arzheimer 2009)." Moreover, Armiegedon and Ceka (2014) develops the claim that "core support for the EU, which was already weakening, has diminished sharply during the recession." That is to say, it appears probable that Euro-skepticism and broader nationalist appeal has become a more important motive of right-wing populism since the recession.

The basic premises of Hatton's (2016, b) argument is, "it is possible that immigration opinion will become more favorable as fiscal conditions improve and the share of welfare spending falls although its salience is on the increase (Hatton 2016,b)." On the whole, this research appears to validate the view that the increasing support for right-wing populist

parties (particularly in Northwest Europe) is more likely to be a consequence of their 'Euro-skeptic' and 'anti-bailout platforms' rather than their 'anti-immigration policies'. To sum up, although anti-immigration is one of the foundational elements of far-right policies, yet, the results on these grounds indicate that shift to the right have not originated from an upsurge of anti-immigrant sentiment. It can rather be viewed as a strategy of politicians to regain the support of 'disaffected voters' who lost their trust in political institutions.

3.1.5 – Public opinion on EU level migration policy

Despite the negative trends indicating loss of trust in EU and European institutions upon the recession, there is surprisingly increasing strong support for EU-wide immigration and asylum policy. Based on Eurobarometer surveys at five-year intervals from 2000 to 2015, the results suggest a substantial increase in support for EU level decision-making and, by interference, for joint EU policy on asylum (see Table 11, Hatton, 2017). "Focusing on the EU-15, the country mean increased by 16 percentage points over the decade from 2000 and the number of countries for which a majority preferred EU-level policy increased from one-third to two-thirds. Supporters also form a majority in every one of the countries that joined the EU in the accessions of 2004 and 2008. […] It seems more likely public opinion has recognized that at least some elements of policy would be more effective if managed at the EU level (Hatton, 2017)."

3.1.6 – Public opinion on illegal immigration

While public opinion in Europe is increasingly positive for legal immigrants and refugees on average, an overwhelming majority of Europeans are against illegal immigration. "In general, the level of concern about illegal immigration is more than double that about legal immigration. Even more strikingly, these concerns increased sharply over the four years from 2009 to 2013, which on average increased about 10 percentage points. It seems likely that the share expressing concerns would have increased further as the migration crisis unfolded. […] As a number of studies have shown, anti-immigration attitudes are often related to other broadly defensive traits (see Hatton, 2016, b). Such traits are often associated with a lack of trust in public institutions and in government policy (Hatton, 2017)." Based on 2014 and 2015 Eurobarometer surveys, Hatton (2017) indicates that the overwhelming majority of respondents favor additional measures to be taken against illegal immigration from outside the EU. "The proportion supporting additional measures against illegal immigration is more than three quarters in every country except Romania. […] In every single country, more than half of the respondents favour tougher policies either at the EU level alone or in conjunction with the national government (see Table 12, Hatton, 2017)." Since most of asylum seekers coming to Europe enter illegally, a reform to asylum policy must discourage unauthorized entry in order to gain public support. Hatton (2017) emphasizes that strengthening border control enforcement is a vital aspect of gaining public support and establish cooperation between countries; and essentially implementing a comprehensive EU-level resettlement scheme for a more efficient asylum policy.

3.2 – Effects of political economic factors on European asylum policies

The foregoing discussion implies that asylum policies are partly regulated by political economic factors in destination countries. There has been relatively little research into empirical evidence on explicit correlations between political factors and asylum policies until Burmann, Drometer and Méango (2017). The data yielded by this study provides convincing evidence on the relationship between elections and political parties and the number of first-time asylum applications. These findings by Burmann et al., (2017) are in line with the previous literature on the determinants of refugee inflows (see e.g.: Czaika, 2009; Gudbransen, 2010; Hatton, 2009, 2016, b; Hatton and Moloney, 2015; Holzer et al., 2000; Moore and Shellman, 2007; Neumayer, 2004, 2005; Toshkov, 2014). At the same time, Burmann et al. (2017), also relate to the literature on political budget cycles of Nordhaus (1975) which argues that "incumbent politicians have strong incentives to distort public policies in order to increase approval rates whenever elections are pending." This analysis can also be considered as a test of whether parties converge to the interests of the median voter (Downs, 1957), or implement the policies they favor on ideological grounds (Hibbs, 1977; Alesina, 1987).

The findings of this study (Burmann et al.,2017) was borne out by research on a bilateral panel data set compromising 12 European destination countries and their 51 most relevant origin countries during the period from 2002 to 2014, combined with European elections with dates and outcomes, and party positions. The position of the government on a left-right scale is derived by weighing the left-right position of the parties in government against the ratio of the parties' seats to the cabinet's total seats in parliament. In order to integrate the political and economic situation in the source countries, the regression methodology that of Hatton (2016, b) is followed. The variables on economic attractiveness of the destination countries, distance between origin and destination countries and stock of immigrants from the origin country are incorporated, represented by the dependent variable as the log of number of first time asylum applicants from citizens of origin country I in destination country j and time t; derived by other specified explanatory variables following the methodology that of Hatton (2016,b).

The results represent estimation for the outcome "log first-time asylum applications per capita" with the model of only two periods, quarters before the election, and quarters after the election including the time of election. Chiefly, the empirical results that are yielded by this study provide strong evidence that asylum flows are affected by the electoral cycle and the identification of incumbent parties. The findings indicate that "in the time before an election the inflow of refugees is very similar across all cabinet, whereas in the quarters just after an election, the inflow of refugees diverges substantially, with significantly less asylum applicants under right-wing cabinets, and significantly more asylum applicants under left-wing cabinets. The results of the estimation confirm that the

turning point is the quarter following the election. [...] This interesting pattern that is robust to several different specifications suggests that both left and right-wing cabinets choose moderate policies before the election and less moderate policies after the election. In line with the literature and the results of Hatton (2016, b), [it is] found that measures of political oppression and violence in the host country are positively correlated with the number of asylum applications (Burmann et al., 2017)." Their findings also confirm previous studies by suggesting that adverse economic conditions in the origin countries also drive asylum applications. Yet, as mentioned in previous studies, economic reasons are not necessarily the primary reason asylum seekers leave their home country. Moreover, a small negative effect of the unemployment rate in the destination country may indicate a reverse causality where higher unemployment rate reducing the attractiveness of the destination country, or in case of higher unemployment more restrictive asylum policies being implemented. In brief, the results clearly show a strong effect of elections and orientation of political parties on the number of first-time asylum applications. "This highlights the need to better model the influence of political economy factors such as elections or interactions among receiving countries when analyzing the determinants of refugee inflows (Goerlach and Motz, 2017)."

CHAPTER 4 - The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and burden sharing

Burden-sharing is a vital problem since asylum applications are disproportionately distributed among European countries. When the ratio of asylum applicants to host country populations are analyzed, there are substantial differences between countries. Even though the country rankings might differ from one year to the other, the magnitude of disproportion is similar. Hatton (2016, c) explains that these divergences are partly due to the biased preferences of asylum seekers towards some countries, based on 'pull effects' that they generate, language and cultural affinity, or existing diaspora. In addition, the ease of access to the territory and regulations concerning migratory policies are also essential.

In Hatton (2016, c), the author analyzes this uneven distribution of refugee burden, and reviews the policy developments until the present refugee crisis. Meanwhile, the author argues that greater progress could be accomplished by a "substantial joint programme" for the resettlement of refugees from countries of first asylum instead of spontaneous asylum seeking. (Hatton, 2016, c)" On account of the substantial increase in number of people arriving in European countries or at their borders during the last three decades, each period of surge in asylum applications induced an intense debate of all-encompassing debate and reforms for European asylum system.

EU-led Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was founded in 1999, developed in order to establish competence in asylum policy on EU level with the purpose of reconciliation and coordination in respect to the way in which asylum policies are implemented by member states. However, despite convergence in policy on European level, there are significant differences concerning their implementation on national level. The key measures consist of criteria for granting asylum, the procedures used in adjudicate asylum

claims and the rights and conditions allowed to asylum seekers. Dublin Regulation was one of the earliest agreements which imposes that an asylum application is to be processed by one member state, typically the first country of entry. Other measures incorporate an integrated fingerprint database (EURODAC), cooperation over border controls with the establishment of FRONTEX, and the introduction of the biometric visa system (VIS) in the Schengen states.

The essential purpose of CEAS is to reconcile rules and regulations in order to ensure that an asylum seeker receives comparably the same treatment in each member state. On the other hand, the author (Hatton, 2016, c) emphasizes that sharing out the burdens or responsibilities across member states has been given much less importance. Following the Kosovo crisis, the EU established a common financial repository that is now called Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) with the purpose of financing refugee integration and resource provision to member states under pressure of a mass influx of refugees. Subsequently, the Temporary Protection Directive was initiated for the relocation of refugees from the member states under exceptional pressure of a mass influx, albeit it was inadequate to organize 'a formal triggering mechanism or a formula for redistribution'. As a matter of fact, regardless of pressure from some countries (such as Italy, Malta, and Greece etc.) it has never been put into effect. In 2010, the European Asylum Support Office was established in Malta with the aspiration of "disseminating best-practice methods and supporting states facing exceptional asylum pressures (Hatton, 2016, c)." As much as the office is also anticipated to facilitate relocation of recognized refugees, this is only the case if there is a three-way agreement between member states and the approval of the individuals concerned.

Furthermore, the author discusses obstacles that prevent cooperation between countries to share the burden. One of the important factors that influence immigration policies is the responsibility of governments to their electors, and they must be implemented in a fashion that benefit the interests of host populations. On the other hand, asylum is different in the sense that asylum policies are designed for the benefit of asylum seekers on humanitarian motives, rather than on a basis of direct benefit to the host society or specific individuals of it.

Provided that the number of asylum applications vary greatly between countries, non-cooperative policies would result in some countries where the demand for asylum being disproportionately high, and these countries will implement tougher policies in order to deter applicants to reach the desired level in terms of cost-benefit analysis. On the contrary, if a central authority were to set the same policy on all countries, some could have too many refugees, while others would have too few; impeding the ability to reach the social optimum. Consequently, "a 'benevolent social planner' must consider externality in order to set policies on EU level (Hatton, 2016, c)."

As a matter of fact, an alternative procedure must be implemented in order to reach the social optimum for each country. The author suggests that one possibility is to establish a common fund to provide compensation for countries that are hosting a disproportionate number of refugees. In principle, this is the function of AMIF, nevertheless the magnitude of such transfers is deemed inadequate despite the recent updated version (2014 to 2020, AMIF) with higher budget. The second alternative is to adopt a policy that determines the optimal number for all countries taken together and then to reallocate them to reach the 'right number' for each country. Although this may sound as a good idea, it is difficult due to the challenge of reaching an agreement without an all-powerful social planner when individual countries have an incentive to 'free-ride' (Facchini, Lorz and Willman 2006). Yet, one possibility is to introduce a 'quota trading scheme'; in this case, "the preferences of applicants for destination countries and the preferences of countries for certain types of applicants could be equilibrated by an appropriate matching mechanism (Fernandez-Huertas Moraga and Rapoport 2015)." Establishing a redistribution system of asylum applicants for burden-sharing conveys that there would be 'some optimum number' for the EU altogether, whereas apparently this number has already been far exceeded since the 2015 asylum crisis. With this is mind, it is not unexpected that some countries which are specifically under pressure of a considerable increase in their own asylum applications would refuse to take even more from other countries. Hungary was the leading country among whom strongly opposed this recent redistribution proposal whose number of asylum claims multiplied within the last decade. For instance, during a speech, Hungarian Prime Minister indicated that the deficiency in border controls in some member states was the primary divisive issue. To summarize, the prospect of a more proportionate allocation is not permanently unfeasible; rather the magnitude of the recent upsurge during the asylum crisis made reaching an agreement more difficult.

The steep rise in number of people crossing the Mediterranean and the Aegean with the faith of getting an asylum as a consequence of the Syrian war and other conflicts in Middle East and Africa triggered the debate on redistribution again. In August 2015 a resolution was introduced to redistribute a total of 160 000 asylum applicants from Italy and Greece to other member states but several member states, particularly from countries in Eastern Europe, objected to the proposal. Somewhat because of this resistance, only about 3 000 have been transferred (Hatton, 2016, c).

As has been noted before, although in most countries the popular opinion has become more favorable to refugees (see Hatton, 2017), the majority of European citizens are vigorously against illegal immigration. With this is mind, the 1.82 million illegal crossings into the EU during the migration crisis of 2015 exacerbated the sentiment regarding refugees. Although this may be true, at this point the author Hatton (2016, c) advises an alternative as a deviation from the current system of 'spontaneous asylum seeking' which encourages migrants to undertake dangerous routes with the hopes of an uncertain probability of obtaining asylum. This would suggest the elimination or dramatic reduction

behind the motivation for unauthorized entry into the EU. Particularly, the existent agreement of 18 March 2016 between EU and Turkey constitutes a good example serving this purpose. The agreement allowed "unrecognized migrants to be returned in exchange for recognized refugees", has been efficient in cutting down unauthorized maritime arrivals to a small fraction of the previous years' numbers (Hatton, 2016, c)." Notwithstanding, the author (Hatton, 2016, c) argues that if tougher border controls were to be enforced on all the major migration routes; it would "deny access not only to those with doubtful claims of asylum, but also to genuine refugees." For this reason, the author emphasizes that it is crucial for these policies to be coupled with a "'comprehensive resettlement programme' which requires an agreement on burden sharing (Hatton, 2016, c)."

The scope of public support for resettlement is unknown, however as presented by (Hatton, 2017), there is substantial support for EU-level decision-making on immigration and asylum. Another key point mentioned in this article is that resettlement programs give priority to those with most urgent and serious claims, meanwhile avoiding the dangers of hazardous travel conditions and other issues such as exploitation. First, these advantages make resettlement programs more likely to obtain public support; second, without the logistical inconveniencies of spontaneous asylum seeking they are also easier for governments to accommodate. To conclude, the author stresses the importance of "an authority with the legislative power to act as a social planner" to achieve this objective. Nevertheless, there is a lot that needs to be done and the process needs to be initiated on the EU level.

PART II – DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 5 – Empirical data analysis on bilateral asylum flows

5.1 – Current general facts on numbers of forcibly displayed people

According to UNHCR, as of June 19, 2018, there are approximately 68.5 million forcibly displaced people; which consist of refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, and refugee like persons. 40 million of the total are internally displaced within the borders of their home country; 25.4 million are recognized as refugees in their host countries, where 19.9 million are under UNHCR mandate and 5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA. A total of 3.1 asylum seekers are currently in process of examination of their asylum claim made either in or within their destination country borders, waiting for a decision on their application for asylum. 57% of refugees worldwide originate from Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan. In addition, an estimated 16.2 million people were newly displaced in 2017 (11.8 internally displaced persons and 4.4 million newly displaced refugees and asylum seekers) and it is estimated that 44 400 people a day are forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. Moreover, there are 10 million stateless people not included in the total of forcibly displaced people. UNHCR estimates the total number of forcibly displaced people worldwide to be 79 831 482 by the end of 2018, and 78 773 789 for 2019.

There were 1.7 million new asylum claims in 2017. The United States of America was the world's largest recipient of new individual asylum claims with 331 700 new applications mainly due to applications from North of Central America (NCA), followed by Germany (198 300), Italy (126 500), and Turkey (126 100). Altogether, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of all refugees worldwide came from just five countries: Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar and Somalia.

5.2 – Comparison of the number of refugee stock versus GDP and population in developing and industrialized countries

It is crucial to indicate that, despite the attention to asylum flows into Western countries in recent years, most of the world's refugees are located in developing nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America. What is more, 85 percent of the world's displaced people are being hosted in developing countries; primarily in Turkey, Uganda, Pakistan, Lebanon and Islamic Republic of Iran. For the fourth consecutive year, Turkey hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide, with 3.5 million people in 2017. The other main countries of asylum for refugees were: Pakistan, Uganda, Lebanon, Islamic Republic of Iran, Germany, Bangladesh and Sudan. With the data generated following the methodology that of Hatton (2012) updated with numbers for 2017, Table 1 compares the countries hosting the largest number of refugees with some of the major developed host countries.

To begin with, Column (2) in Table 1 below illustrates the number of refugee stock in countries hosting the largest number of refugees (exc. Germany which is included into the list of industrialized countries). The numbers of refugee stock in destination countries are taken from the Global Trends report of UNHCR. Column (3) corresponds to the ratio of the population of the host country to the number of refugees, and Column (4) corresponds to the ratio of the refugee stock divided by the host country's GDP displaying the number of refugees per million dollars of GDP. The GDP measure used in this test is nominal GDP in million dollars USD, taken from the World Bank website. In a like manner, by using the same sources for information, Column (6) indicates the number of the refugee stock in major refugee-hosting developed countries, Column (7) corresponds to the ratio of the population of the host country to the number of refugees, and Column (8) corresponds to the ratio of the refugee stock divided by the host developed country's GDP. The disproportionate distribution of refugees is an issue for some of the world's poorest countries. In contrast to general definition of refugee as being outside their country of origin, most refugees are only relocated across the border, and most of the world's refugees are often in camps where they usually lack basic necessities and security.

Table 1 - Number of refugee stock in developing and industrialized countries hosting the largest number of refugees

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Host Country	Refugees (2017)	Pop/ #Ref	#Ref/GDP	Host Country	Refugees (2017)	Pop/ #Ref	#Ref/GDP
Turkey	3 789 119	21.62	4.45	Germany	970 302	84.81	0.26
Pakistan	1 393 132	114.15	4.57	France	337 177	193.47	0.13
Uganda	1 350 495	32.78	52.16	USA	287 129	1138.05	0.01
Lebanon	998 876	6.10	19.27	Sweden	240 962	41.43	0.45
Iran	979 519	83.73	2.23	Italy	167 335	354.32	0.09
Bangladesh	932 209	178.47	3.73	UK	121 837	546.41	0.05
Sudan	906 585	45.79	7.72	Austria	115 263	75.93	0.28
Ethiopia	889 397	120.91	11.04	Canada	104 778	352.69	0.06
Jordan	691 010	14.33	17.25	Netherlands	103 860	164.50	0.13
DR Congo	537 087	156.41	14.42	Switzerland	93 056	91.82	0.14
Kenya	431 880	117.97	5.76	Norway	59 236	90.37	0.15
Chad	411 482	37.31	41.23	Australia	48 482	510.96	0.04

As of the end of 2017, Lebanon continues to host the largest number of refugees relative to its population, where 1 in 6 people was a refugee under the responsibility of UNHCR. Jordan (1 in 14) and Turkey (1 in 22) ranked second and third, respectively. When Palestine refugees under UNRWA are also considered, the figures increase to 1 in 4 for Lebanon and 1 in 3 for Jordan. For the top 12 refugee-hosting developing countries, there is 1 refugee per 77 people on average. When we analyze the number of refugees divided by the GDP in million dollars USD, the figures are even more striking. For the 12-top refugee-hosting developing nations, there are more than 15 refugees per million dollars of GDP on an unweighted 12 country average. On the other hand, for industrialized countries, Germany has the largest number of refugee stock among industrialized countries, and it

hosts the sixth largest number of refugees worldwide where there is one refugee per 85 people. Relative to its population, Sweden is the host to the largest number of refugees among the developed nations (1 in 41). Sweden is followed by Austria (1 in 76), Germany (1 in 85) and Norway (1 in 90). For the top 12 major refugee-hosting industrialized countries, on an unweighted 12 country average there is 1 refugee per 304. When we investigate the number of refugees divided by the GDP, the unweighted 12 country average equates to 0.15 refugees per million dollars of GDP. These figures illustrate a substantial contrast in comparison with developing nations, correlating to 100 times more refugees per million dollars of GDP in developing nations hosting the largest number of refugees, compared with major industrialized refugee-hosting countries. Relative to its GDP, Sweden is also the host to the largest number of refugees among the developed nations on the list, followed by Austria and Germany. Despite being the third on the list among developed refugee-hosting nations according to the total number of refugee stock and being the world's largest recipient of new individual asylum claims in 2017, the United States of America has the lowest number of refugees per million dollars of GDP by 0.01 refugees per million dollars of GDP. This study highlights the disproportional refugee burden among refugee hosting nations in 2017. Taken together, the results of this investigation seem to confirm the motive of humanitarian organizations that have focused their attention on improving living conditions for those stranded in refugee camps located in countries that lack sufficient capacity to host substantial number of refugees.

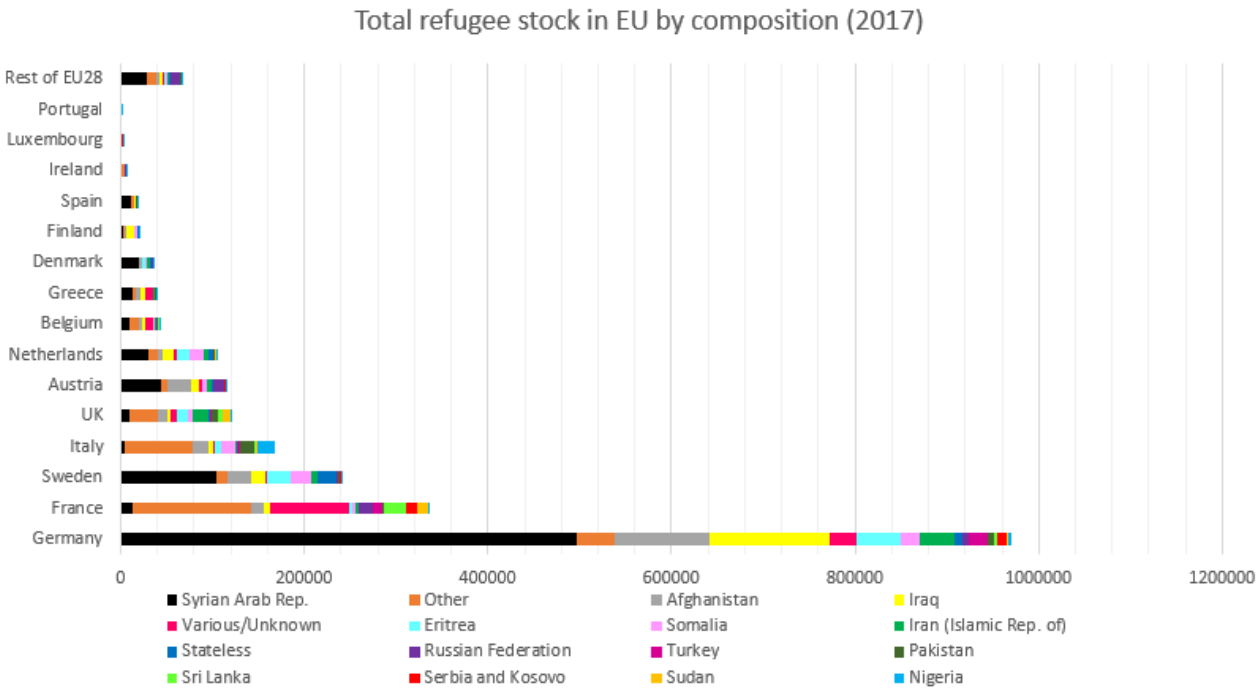
5.3 – Refugee stock in European Union countries (from origin perspective)

5.3.1 – Refugee stock in EU15 countries and EU28 as a whole

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter 4, the distribution of refugee stock is disproportional not only on a global scale, but also within European countries. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of total refugee stock in EU countries as of the end of 2017. The data on refugee stock are obtained from UNHCR population statistics database on relevant origin and destination countries. The total refugee stock for each EU destination by composition are presented with a stacked bar chart on Figure 1, comparing the total refugee stock in each EU15 countries and the rest of EU28 countries altogether on a separate bar. The stacked bars indicate composition of the refugee stock in major destination for refugees in EU countries, fractioned into countries of origin where highest number of refugees to the EU originate from. Stateless people and 'various/unknown' category whose information on origin country is undefined or unknown by UNHCR are also included in the chart because they make up a substantial fraction of total refugee stock in EU countries along with other 13 relevant countries of origin. In this analysis, refugees from origin countries which constitute a lower share of the total refugee stock in the EU other than the leading 13 are categorized into 'other' category. What is interesting in this data is that when we analyze the top 12 countries of origin in each EU15 country, these countries of origin are quite diversified for different EU15 destination countries, corresponding to 39 countries of origin

each of which is included in top 12 origin countries of refugees in at least one or more EU15 destination country. These 39 countries of origin consist of 17 Sub-Saharan Africa and North African countries (Somalia, Erithrea, DR Congo, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Guinea, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Mali, Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Libya, Uganda, Angola), 8 Middle Eastern countries (Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Palestine, Yemen plus Turkey and Armenia), 7 East and South Asian countries (China, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh), 4 Eastern European countries (Serbia and Kosovo, Ukraine, Albania plus Russian Federation) and 2 Latin American countries (Cuba and Colombia). The origin countries displayed on Figure 1 consist of 13 origin countries that make up the highest total number of current refugee stock in EU countries overall, and Table 2 provides corresponding numbers for each of these origin countries along with their shares in the total refugee stock. The full size of Figure 1 and Table 2 can be found in the Annex A5.3.1 for a closer look.

Figure 1- Total refugee stock in EU by composition (2017)



	Total EU15	% Total EU15	Rest of EU28	% Rest of EU	Total EU28	% Total EU28		Total EU15	% Total EU15	Rest of EU28	% Rest of EU	Total EU28	% Total EU28
Syrian Arab F	758113	34,31%	28528	42,82%	786641	34,44%	Russian Fede	41197	1,86%	11145	16,73%	52342	2,29%
Other	328997	14,37%	10197	15,31%	339194	14,69%	Stateless	44073	1,99%	1547	2,32%	45620	2,00%
Afghanistan	217397	9,84%	2703	4,06%	220100	9,64%	Turkey	37738	1,71%	333	0,50%	38071	1,67%
Iraq	199893	9,05%	4412	6,62%	204305	8,95%	Sri Lanka	35883	1,62%	129	0,19%	36012	1,58%
Various/Unk	144887	6,56%	1649	2,48%	146536	6,42%	Pakistan	33972	1,54%	224	0,34%	34196	1,50%
Eritrea	123634	5,60%	1131	1,70%	124765	5,46%	Nigeria	28509	1,29%	213	0,32%	28722	1,26%
Somalia	93245	4,22%	2820	4,23%	96065	4,21%	Serbia and K	27280	1,23%	247	0,37%	27527	1,21%
Iran (Islamic	80356	3,64%	1002	1,50%	81358	3,56%	Sudan	25966	1,18%	343	0,51%	26309	1,15%
Total	2221140	100,00%	66623	100,00%	2283981	100,00%	Total	2221140	100,00%	66623	100,00%	2283981	100,00%

Table 2 - Total refugee stock in EU by composition (2017)

From this data, we can clearly see that refugees from Syrian Arab Republic constitute the largest share of total refugee stock in EU15 countries (out of 2 221 140 for EU15 total) with a total of 758 113 refugees and also for all EU28 countries as a whole (out of 2 283 981 for EU28 total) with 786 641 refugees. Refugees from Syria form the majority not only in

EU15 countries, but also for the rest of EU28 (out of 66 623 for EU28 excluding EU15); correspondingly for all EU28 countries. While refugees from Syria make up about 34% of the total refugee stock for EU15 and EU28, their proportion in rest of EU countries other than EU15 increases to 43%. Refugees from Afghanistan are the second group within the total refugee stock in the EU, followed by Iraq, Erithrea, Somalia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Russian Federation, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nigeria, Serbia and Kosovo, and Sudan. These aforementioned 13 countries along with 'various/unknown' (fifth largest group on EU level) and stateless persons category (tenth largest group) make up the 16 major origins of the refugees immigrated to the European Union countries.

These findings on origin countries of refugees in the EU enhance our understanding of key factors that trigger refugee displacements. The figures concerning Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq can be explained mainly by civil war, persistent large-scale conflicts and violence. The figures on Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria, and Sudan can also be interpreted as consequences of high-volume conflict, violence, and human rights abuse. However, we can also observe that some of these origin countries that generate highest numbers of refugees to the EU may not be directly related to conflict. For instance, Islamic Republic of Iran is known for its oppressive regimes against religious and ethnic minorities and human rights abuse. Russian Federation and Turkey are also known for authoritarian government regimes, human rights abuse and oppression against ethnic and religious minorities. Situation in Pakistan can be related to conflicts in neighboring Afghanistan and Kashmir conflict with India. Refugees from Serbia and Kosovo are mainly related to Yugoslavian civil war, however there are still some persisting conflicts between ethnic Serbs and Albanians. On UNHCR website, it is indicated that Sri Lanka is one of the few countries that still did not sign 1951 Convention and refugee and asylum seeker status are not recognized by the Sri Lankan government. Most interestingly, even though countries such as Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan and Ethiopia are hosting the some of the largest numbers of refugees worldwide, they are also among countries that a significant number of refugees originate from, especially towards Europe. In general, the results of the analysis validate the findings of the literature that war and oppression are at the heart of refugee flights, and we can indicate that lack of political and civil rights and liberties, coupled with human rights abuse and adverse economic conditions generate refugee flights; and they are further intensified in volume when they are related with some degree of conflict (see Section 2.1). We can apply this reasoning in order to interpret most of the refugee displacements from aforementioned 39 countries that generate the highest number of refugees which constitute the current refugee stock in the EU countries as of 2017.

5.3.2 – Refugee stock in European Union countries excluding EU15

Although the origin country rankings are the same for EU15 and EU28 both (except 'stateless' category), we can observe some changes in origin country rankings for EU destination countries excluding EU15. Following Syria and Russia, Iraq comes as the third

origin country in this category surpassing Afghanistan with a small difference. We can also observe that numbers on Somalia, stateless persons, Pakistan, Serbia and Kosovo, Nigeria, and Sudan also create some minimal differences on country ranking. Since they did not generate the most substantial numbers on EU level as a whole not included in this list; origin countries such as Libya, Palestine, Ukraine, and Belarus are also some origin countries that have substantial numbers of refugees in EU countries excluding E15.

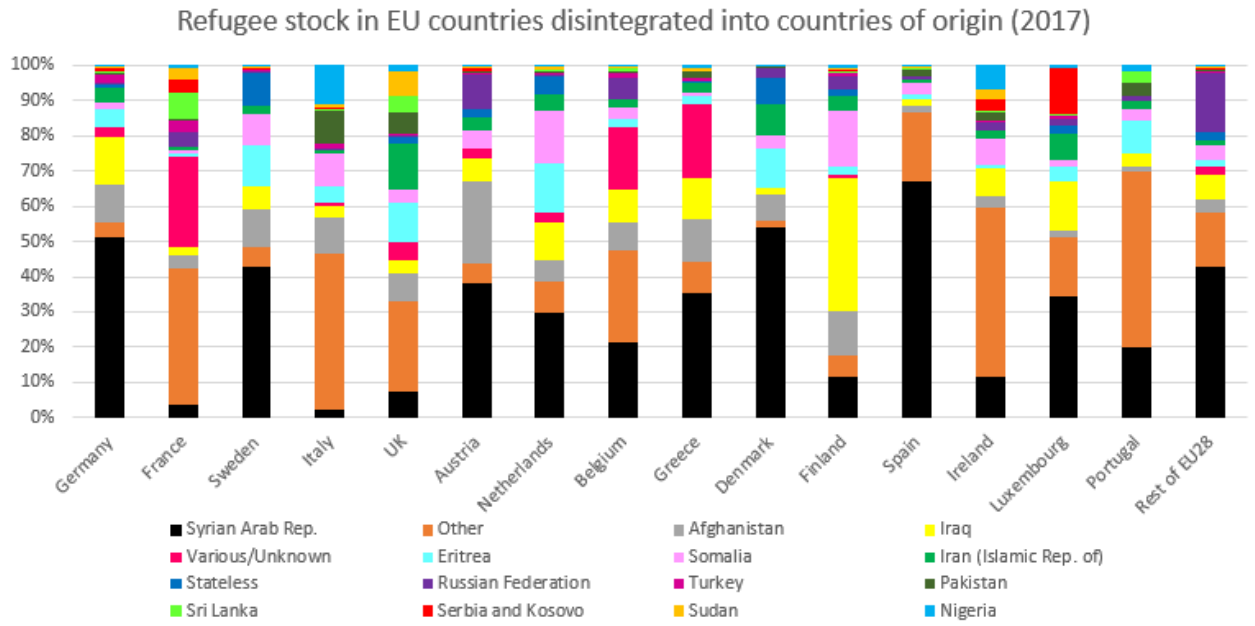
The most surprising aspect of this data is that when we inspect the major origin countries of refugees to the EU15 and EU28 separately, the country rankings and their share in relevant total refugee population stay unchanged for the most part, however there is a substantial difference. The most remarkable difference is that despite refugees from the Russian Federation are ranked eighth on the list for both EU15 and EU28 as a whole, for the EU countries that are not included EU15, Russia is ranked as the second origin country where highest number of refugees originate from; with 17% of the total refugee stock for EU destination countries excluding EU15. Related to the previous literature that of Hatton (2016), a possible explanation for this might be "language and cultural affinity, or existing diaspora (Section 4.1 - also see Section 2.2, Havinga and Boecker, (1999); Robinson and Segrott, (2002); Day and White, (2001)." Not only almost all of the countries exluding EU15 joined the European Union during enlargement period after the Cold War upon the break up of the Soviet Union are Eastern European countries (excluding Cyprus and Malta), and also they were either part of the Soviet Union (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) or satellite states of the Soviet Union that had socialist governments during the Cold War era (Croatia (Yugoslavia), Czech Republic and Slovakia (Czechoslovakia), Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. Although these findings may validate the effect of language and culture affinity and existing diaspora as an explanation for destination choice of refugees, they need to be interpreted with caution because of policy and distance factors. As a caveat, it is important to mention that there may be a causal effect of policy since policy is an endogenous factor regarding asylum flows. In other words, even though factors such as cultural and language affinity and existing diaspora may generate a 'pull' effect influencing the destination choice of refugees; on the other hand, the public opinion and asylum policy may also be more accepting for refugees from countries that have similar perceived ethnic and cultural values.

5.4 – Refugee stock in European Union countries (from destination perspective)

In previous section, we have demonstrated the volume of the refugee stock in each EU15 country by their composition according to countries of origin. In this section, we will analyze this data from UNHCR population statistics database on a total of 2 283 981 refugees hosted in the European Union countries closer by examining their compositions according to origin country by breaking them up into a percentile. The data is illustrated in Figure 2 below. Furthermore, Figure 3 compares the ratio of the total refugee stock in each EU

country to the total refugee stock in the EU. More details on this data can be found in the Annex A5.4 for closer inspection.

Figure 2 - Refugee stock in EU countries disintegrated into countries of origin (2017)

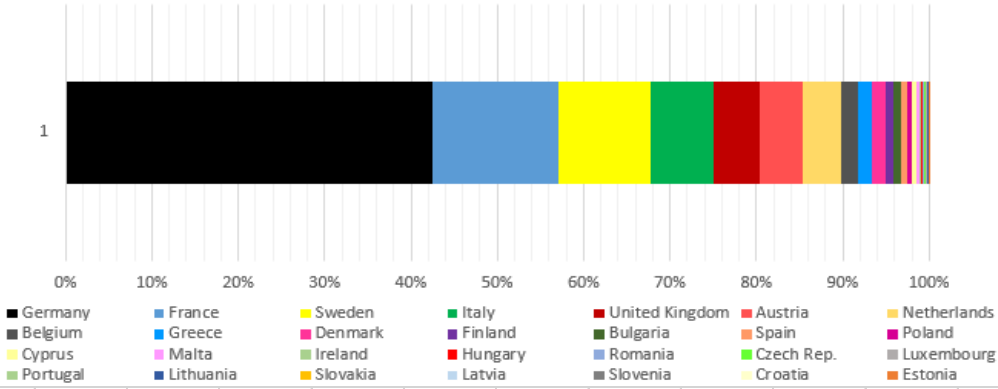


In Germany, which is the country hosting the largest stock of refugees both in the EU and among the industrialized countries, we observe that refugees from Syrian Arab Republic constitute about 51 percent of the current refugee stock. Syria is followed by Iraq (13 percent of the stock), Afghanistan (11 percent), Eritrea (5 percent), and Islamic Republic of Iran (5 percent); where these top 5 countries making up 85 percent of the total refugee stock in Germany. France is the EU country hosting the second largest number of refugees and based on this study we observe that it has the most diverse origin countries of refugees. In France, 'Various/Unknown' category is surprisingly the largest group according to classification by origin, correlating to 26 percent of the total refugee stock. Sri Lankan refugees are the largest individual group of origin country (with 7 percent of the total refugee stock), followed by Russian Federation (5 percent), Afghanistan (4 percent), Serbia and Kosovo (4 percent). Included in 'other' category, refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo are also a large group in France, with about 5 percent of the total refugee stock. These 5 largest categories of refugees by origin country form 25 percent of the total refugee stock in France. The origin countries that do not form the top 12 origin countries which are categorized as 'other', make up 38 percent of the total refugee stock. In Sweden, 43 percent of the refugees originate from Syria, followed by Eritrea (11 percent), Afghanistan (11 percent), Somalia (9 percent), and stateless persons (9 percent). These 5 largest sub-categories of refugees by their origin country establish 83 percent of the total refugee stock in Sweden. In Italy, which is the forth country hosting the largest number of refugees in the European Union, the largest group of refugees originate from Nigeria (11 percent), Afghanistan (10 percent), Pakistan (10 percent), Somalia (9 percent), and included in 'other' category, from Mali (8 percent). The refugees from these 5 countries form 48 percent of the

total refugee stock in Italy. In United Kingdom, refugees from Islamic Republic of Iran are the largest group by origin with 13 percent of the total, followed by Eritrea (11 percent), Afghanistan (8 percent), Zimbabwe (categorized as 'other' – 7 percent), and Sudan (7 percent); correlating to 46 percent of the total refugee stock in UK. In Austria, 38 percent of refugees are from Syria, 23 percent from Afghanistan, 10 percent from Russia, 6 percent from Iraq and 5 percent from Somalia. A total of 82 percent of refugees in Austria are from these five countries. In Netherlands, refugees originating from Syria are the largest group (30 percent), followed by Somalia (15 percent), Eritrea (14 percent), Iraq (11 percent), and stateless persons (5 percent); forming 75 percent of the total refugee stock. In Belgium, Syrian refugees are the largest group by origin (22 percent), the second largest group is 'various/unknown' (18 percent), Iraq (9 percent), Afghanistan (8 percent) and Guinea (classified as 'other' – 6 percent), where these 5 origin classifications form 63% of the total. In Greece, which is the ninth largest refugee hosting EU country, with 35 percent Syrian refugees are the largest group of refugees by origin, second are refugees classified as 'various/unknown' which are 21 percent of the total refugee stock, followed by Afghanistan (12 percent), Iraq (11 percent) and Iran (3 percent). In total these five countries correspond to 82 percent of the refugee stock in Greece. In Denmark, refugees from Syria are the majority with 54 percent of the refugee stock, followed by Eritrea (11 percent), Iran (9 percent), stateless persons (8 percent), Afghanistan (8 percent); corresponding to 90 percent of the total refugee stock. In Finland, which is the 11th EU country hosting the largest number of refugees, the largest refugee groups by origin are from Iraq (38 percent), Somalia (16 percent), Afghanistan (12 percent), Syria (11 percent), and Iran (4 percent); where refugees from these five origin countries corresponding to 81 percent of the total refugee population.

In this analysis, we focused mostly on EU15 countries, however there are some EU28 countries excluding EU15 that are hosting larger number of refugees than some of the EU15 countries. The EU country that is hosting 12th largest number of refugees is Bulgaria, where 86 percent of refugees originate from Syria, 6 percent from Iraq, 5 percent stateless persons, 1 percent from Afghanistan and less than 1 percent from Iran. Taken altogether, these five origin groups form more than 99 percent of the refugee stock in Bulgaria. Spain, which is on 13th position, the largest groups of refugees by origin are Syria (67 percent), Cuba (classified as 'other' 5 percent), Palestinian (classified as 'other' - 5 percent), Somalia (3 percent) and Ukraine (classified as 'other' - 2 percent); equating to 82 percent of the total. Poland is the 14th EU country with the most refugees; where 82 percent from Russia, 4 percent from Syria, 3 percent from Ukraine, 2 percent from Iraq and 2 percent from Belarus (93 percent total for 5 top origins). Cyprus comes after Poland, with a refugee stock composed of 54 percent from Syria, 20 percent from Palestine, 9 percent from Iraq, 5 percent from Iran and 2 percent from Turkey (90 percent of the total for the 5 major origins). Cyprus is followed by Malta, (31 percent from Libya, 22 percent from Somalia, 16

Figure 3- Ratio of the refugee stock in each EU country to the total refugee stock in the EU



1	Germany	970302	42,48%	11	Finland	20713	0,91%	21	Luxembourg	1995	0,09%
2	France	337143	14,76%	12	Bulgaria	19141	0,84%	22	Portugal	1569	0,07%
3	Sweden	240899	10,55%	13	Spain	17526	0,77%	23	Lithuania	1557	0,07%
4	Italy	167260	7,32%	14	Poland	12190	0,53%	24	Slovakia	887	0,04%
5	United Kingc	121766	5,33%	15	Cyprus	9745	0,43%	25	Latvia	638	0,03%
6	Austria	115197	5,04%	16	Malta	7949	0,35%	26	Slovenia	591	0,03%
7	Netherlands	103818	4,55%	17	Ireland	6324	0,28%	27	Croatia	448	0,02%
8	Belgium	42128	1,84%	18	Hungary	5641	0,25%	28	Estonia	380	0,02%
9	Greece	38948	1,71%	19	Romania	3876	0,17%				
10	Denmark	35593	1,56%	20	Czech Rep.	3580	0,16%		Total	2283981	100,00%

Table 3- Ratio of the refugee stock in each EU country to the total refugee stock in the EU

percent from Syria, 10 percent from Eritrea and 8 percent various/unknown – 5 country total of 87%). The 17th EU destination country is Ireland – with 11 percent from Syria, 8 percent from Iraq, 8 percent from Somalia, 7 percent from Nigeria and 6 percent from DR Congo. Ireland is followed by Hungary (25% Afghanistan, 16% Syria, 16% various/unknown, 12% Somalia, 11% Iraq – 80% 5 country total), Romania (59% Syria, 21% Iraq, 4% Afghanistan, 3% stateless persons, 2% Iran – 89% of the total), Czech Republic (12% Ukraine, 10% Syria, 10% Belarus, 9% Russia, 7% Afghanistan – 48% of the total), Luxembourg (34% Syria, 14% Iraq, 13% Serbia and Kosovo, 7% Iran, 4% Albania – 72% of the total), Portugal (24% Ukraine, 20% Syria, 9% Eritrea, 7% Guinea, 5% Colombia – 65% of the total), Lithuania (41% Russia, 23% Syria, 14% Afghanistan, 4% Ukraine, 4% Iraq – 86% of the total), Slovakia (28% Syria, 24% Iraq, 5% Serbia and Kosovo, 5% Cuba, 4% Romania), Latvia (62% Syria, 9% Afghanistan, 5% Iraq, 5% Eritrea, 4% Russia – 85% of the total), Slovenia (36% Syria, 11% Serbia and Kosovo, 10% Iran, 8% Eritrea), Croatia (43% Syria, 14% Iraq, 10% Afghanistan, 8% Bosnia and Herzegovina, 5% Somalia – 80% of the total), and lastly Estonia (40% Syria, 23% Ukraine, 8% Iraq, 7% Russia, 6% Sudan – 84% of the total).

Taken altogether, this data demonstrates the composition of current refugee stock in each EU country and the countries where they originate from. However, these figures only show the number of current refugee population in EU countries with recognized status as a refugee, and they do not demonstrate the number of asylum applicants, nor the changes in asylum applications over time. In the next section, we will explore the trends on demand for asylum and recognition rates in EU countries during the past decade.

5.5 – Asylum inflows into EU countries

Until now, our discussion has been focused on current refugee stock in EU countries based on UNHCR data as of the end of 2017. In this section, we will observe the changes on asylum inflows over time during the past decade, from 2008 to 2017. Furthermore, we will also analyze the trends on recognition rates in EU countries during the past decade, in order to illustrate the share of how many asylum applications made by asylum seekers were approved and recognized as a refugee.

5.5.1 – Asylum inflows into EU countries over time relative to their population

As mentioned in the literature review of Chapter 4, discussed by Hatton (2016) disproportionate distribution of asylum applications within EU countries is a 'burden-sharing' problem that puts some member states under exceptional pressure hindering successful refugee integration and resource provision. Additionally, uneven distribution of asylum applicants obstructs increasing the total refugee hosting capacity within the EU, resulting in some countries having too many refugees meanwhile others have less. Moreover, some member states facing exceptionally high number of asylum applications would implement tougher asylum policies that prevent genuine refugees that are in most need. Instead of current asylum policy of 'spontaneous asylum seeking' encouraging unauthorized entry and hazardous travel conditions, a redistribution mechanism on EU level coupled with stricter border controls would assist those in most need and increase overall refugee hosting capacity of the EU.

Figure 4 - Total asylum applications in the EU (2008-2017)

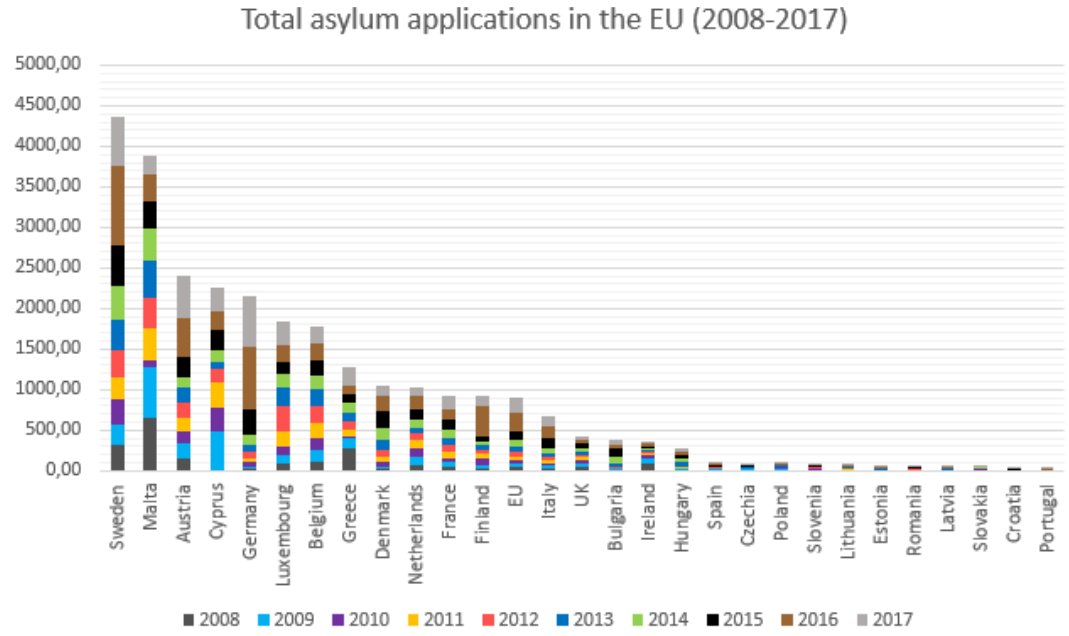
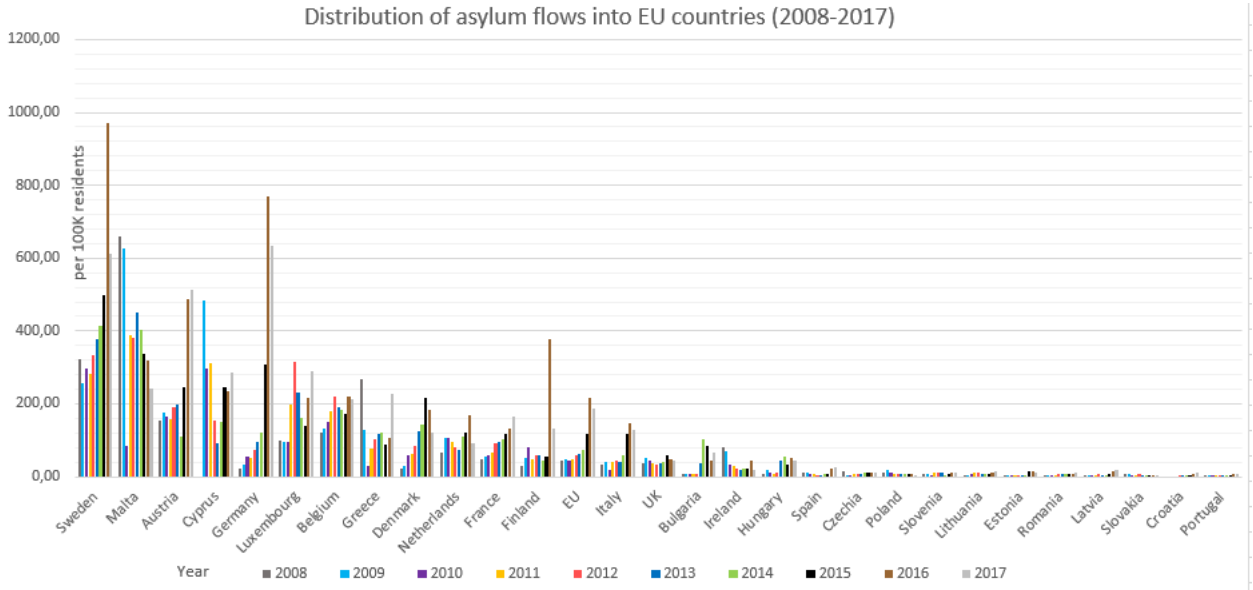


Figure 4 above illustrates the total number of asylum applications into each EU country from 2008 to 2017 taken from Eurostat database on the number of first instance asylum applications, displaying number of asylum applications per 100 000 residents of the

population in the destination country decomposed into number of applications in each year during the past decade on a stacked bar chart. The countries are ranked according to total number of asylum applications during the past decade relative to the population of each member state; from the member states that experienced highest number of applications to the lowest, relative to their population. As shown in Figure 4, with almost 4500 applications per 100 000 residents, relative to its population Sweden is the country that is facing the highest number of asylum applications within EU countries. Sweden is followed by Malta, Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Greece, Denmark, Netherlands, France and Finland. While 12 countries have experienced more asylum applications than the EU average, 16 countries did less. According to the Eurostat data on the number of first instance asylum applications; Italy, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Ireland, Hungary, Spain, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania, Latvia, Slovakia, Croatia and Portugal had less applications per 100 000 of their population than the EU28 average. Taken altogether, these findings suggest that while Scandinavian, Northern and Central European member states are facing higher number of asylum demand than Eastern, Northwestern and Southwestern member states.

Figure 5- Distribution of asylum flows into EU countries (2008-2017)



On the other hand, Figure 5 above represents the same data on a group bar chart with a separate bar for each year and each destination country in order to better observe yearly trends on number of applications. A table with precise numbers on this data used on Figure 4 and 5 can be found in the Annex 5.5 for closer look. On EU-level overall, the number of asylum applications increased gradually from 2008 until peaking in 2016; with a mild decrease in 2017 yet still higher than any year before 2016. According to the literature, although the mass influx of refugees following the Syrian exodus took place in 2015, most of these applications were processed by member states in 2016. Due to this reason, since we

collected this data from the Eurostat database, the number of applications is observed to peak in 2016, not in 2015.

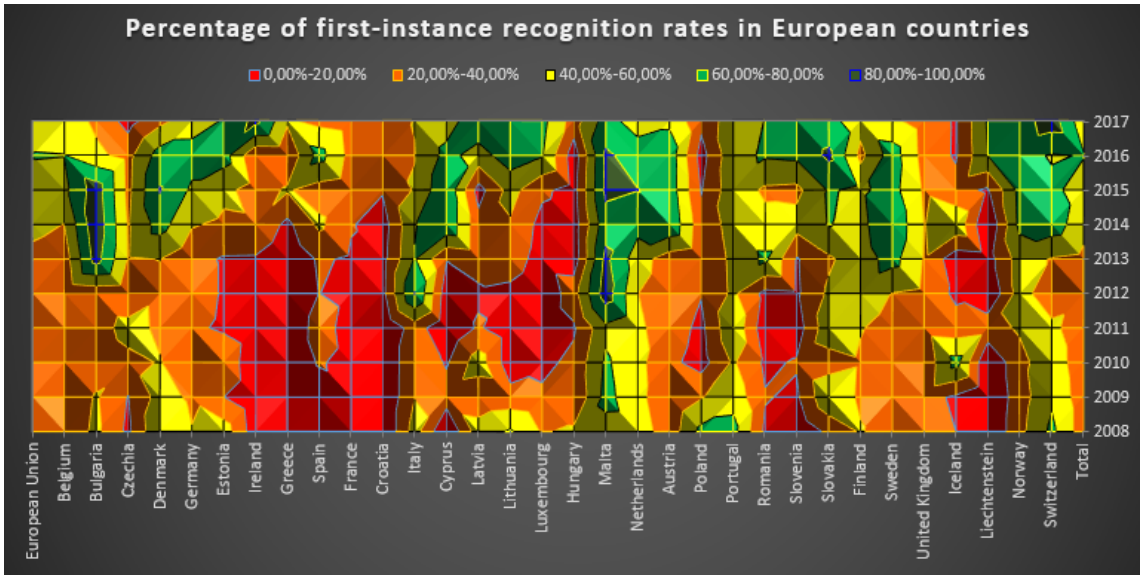
Although the overall trend indicates gradual increase until the peak in 2016, and eventually a mild decrease in 2017, this trend is not the same in every EU member state. We can suggest that the figures on Germany and Sweden almost perfectly fits the overall trend. The figures on Finland, Italy, and Netherlands also follow the overall trend for the most part; whereas in France, Austria, and (although with much smaller numbers) in Spain the peak is in 2017, and in Denmark in 2015; not in 2016. These differences may be interpreted due to different processing times of asylum claims in different destination countries. Interestingly, in Belgium and Luxembourg, the number of first instance asylum applications are observed fluctuate, with a peak in 2012, prior to the mass refugee influx of 2015, but after the recession. Applications in Bulgaria are also observed to peak in 2014, although after 2014 they seem to stay higher than the years before 2014. A similar pattern is also the case with Hungary. Meanwhile, the numbers appear to fluctuate in Greece and the UK. In Greece, the number of applications were at a peak in 2008, and again getting close in 2017, yet with a significant dip in 2010, most likely related to the economic consequences of recession. In the UK, the numbers are steady yet fluctuating, with a mild peak in 2015. A similar fluctuating pattern is also the case for Czech Republic and Slovenia. On the other hand, we can observe considerable decreasing trends primarily in Malta and Cyprus, and also in Ireland, Poland, and Slovakia. Although Lithuania, Estonia, Romania, Latvia, Croatia and Portugal are the EU member states facing the smallest number of asylum applications, the figures are demonstrating a mild but increasing trends. These findings also may also be correlated with some of the findings of the previous literature on political economic factors on asylum policy (see Section 3.2, Burmann et al.; 2017) where the researchers observe that asylum applications decrease significantly and are also less in volume in countries where right-wing oriented governments are in power. However, these figures only illustrate the number of first-instance asylum applications in the EU countries and are not empirically evaluated in order to demonstrate a precise link. In the next section, we will analyze the recognition rates in EU member states, in other words, the share of asylum applications that are recognized and giving the refugee status to applicants.

5.5.2 – Recognition rates of asylum applications in European countries

The literature we have reviewed exclusively focuses on factors that influence the causes and the volume of forced migration, and the volume of the asylum flows and the number of asylum applications made at or within the borders of a destination country. Nevertheless, it is important to look into figures on recognition rate of asylum applications in order to better analyze the biased choice of asylum seekers towards certain countries; moreover, the sociopolitical and economic factors that may influence demand for asylum, asylum policies and processing in asylum claims in destination countries.

Figure 6 and Figure 8 are surface charts that illustrate the recognition rates in each EU country from 2008 to 2017, according to first-instance positive decisions on asylum applications and final decisions for appeals against decisions on asylum applications, respectively. The data yielded by this study is based on Eurostat database regarding the number of total first-instance asylum applications, first-instance positive decisions, total appeals against decisions and final positive decisions for appeals. For comparison, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein were also incorporated into the data. The tables with detailed empirical statistics can be found in Annex A5.5.2.

Figure 6- Percentage of first-instance recognition rates in European countries



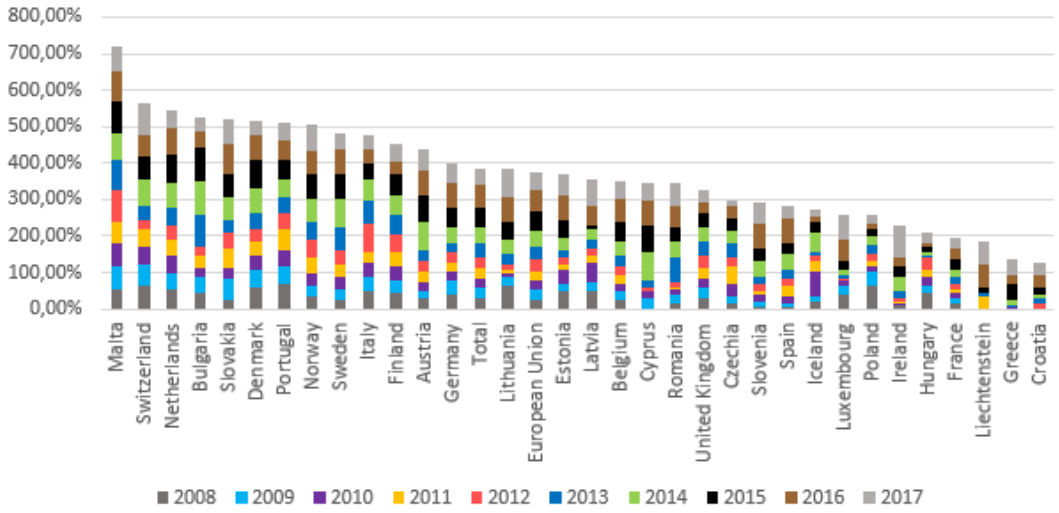
Since there are 28 EU countries and 5 other categories on a 10-year interval correlating to 330 fluctuating observations, surface charts are used in order to demonstrate this data for closer observation from above, without overcrowding. Surface charts can be considered as an unconventional way to illustrate this data, therefore in order to read them; the countries are represented on X-axis, years (from 2008 to 2017) are represented on Y-axis, and every X,Y intersection signifies the percentage of asylum applications recognized as refugee status in the given country and year (recognition/admission rates in destination country j in time t) over the last decade – red correlating to 0-20%, orange 20-40%, yellow 40-60%, light green 60-80%, and dark green 80-100%. On EU level, we can observe a general overall trend on recognition rates like that of number of applications. In 2008, the average first-instance positive decisions on asylum applications correlated to 27% and decreased to 25% in 2010 and 2011. After 2011, average EU28 recognition rate increased until the peak at 61% in 2016, before going down to 46% in 2017. We can observe that trends on recognition rates are more or less similar to that of EU in Belgium (lowest in 2009 with 20%, highest in 2016 with 60%), Denmark (lowest in 2017 with 34%, highest in 2015 with 81%), and Germany (lowest in 2010 with 23%, highest in 2016 with 69%). In Bulgaria the figures reached a low in 2012 (57%) and peak of 94% in 2013 before decreasing thereafter. In Czech Republic the

highest recognition rates reached a peak in 2011 (47%) and were lowest in 2017 with 12%. In Estonia the recognition rates followed a similar pattern to that of EU average but lower, with 17% in 2011 and reached the highest level in 2016 with 68%. In Ireland, the figures show steady increase, from 2% in 2010 to 86% in 2017; in Greece from almost 0% in 2008 up to 43% in 2017. In Spain and France (although lower in France), the patterns are like that of EU average; from 5% in 2008 to 67% in Spain and from 11% in 2011 to 33% in France. Similar patterns are observed also in Croatia with 11% in 2014 to 35% in 2016. It is also important to note that Greece and Croatia had the lowest average recognition rates in the EU during the last decade, however since we do not have the data on Croatia preceding 2013 it is not possible to compare the two. However, in Italy, the figures differ from EU average, recognition rates at their lowest in 2011 at 30%, yet the peak took place in 2014 with 81%. In Cyprus the figures were similar to that of EU average with more fluctuation, with their lowest in 2011 with 3 percent, and up to 77% in 2015 following a sharp increase the previous year. Latvia (lowest in 2015 with 12%), Lithuania (lowest in 2010 with 8%), and Luxembourg (lowest in 2011 with 3%) exhibit similar patterns that of EU average, yet recognition rates reached their highest level in 2017 (74%, 77%, and 66% respectively. In Hungary, the patterns exhibit a fluctuating but decreasing trend, with a modest recovery in 2017 (highest with 44% in 2008; lowest with 8% in 2013 and 2015). Malta had the highest average recognition rates for asylum applications within the last decade (72% on average), at their lowest in 2008 with 53% and highest in 2012 with 90%. The figures on the Netherlands (40%, 2012; 80%, 2015) and Austria (22%, 2009; 76%, 2016) also demonstrate similar patterns to that of EU average. The figures on Poland demonstrate fluctuating but decreasing trend (65%, 2008; 12%, 2015); and Portugal is observed to follow a slightly decreasing trend (67%, 2008; 42%, 2010). The data on Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia demonstrate comparable trends to the EU average (7%, 2011; 3%, 2008; 24%, 2008; respectively for the lowest and highest in 2016 for all with 62%, 64% and 84% respectively). For Finland and the UK, the patterns fluctuate steadily, averaging at 45 and 33 percent respectively. Although not in the EU; Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland were also included in the data for comparison. Switzerland was the second European country after Malta with the highest recognition rates averaging at 57%. The recognition rates peaked in 2017 for Switzerland (90%), Norway (71%), and Liechtenstein (63%). In contrast, Iceland had the highest percentage in 2010 (67%) and the lowest in 2013 (8%).

For the most part, the data yielded by this study suggests that recognition rates for asylum applications were at their lowest for most European countries during the years following the recession, but before the mass refugee influx of 2015. Although there are some decreasing trends in a few countries, in most European countries the recognition rates reached their peak during the last three years.

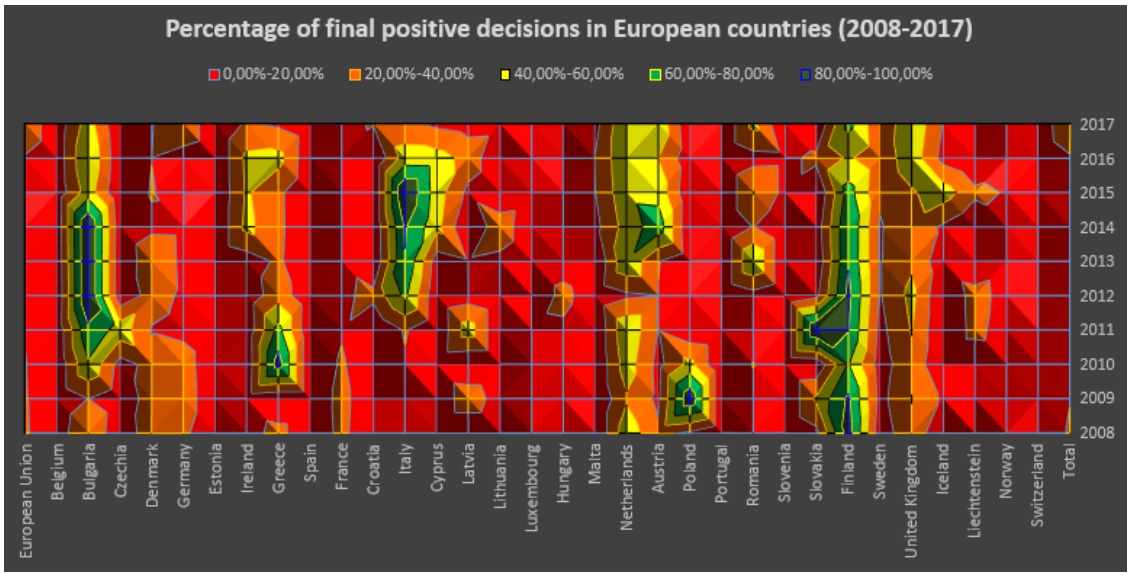
For comparison, the average first-instance recognition rates in the EU countries within the last decade are displayed in order in Figure 7 below:

Figure 7- 10-year average first-instance recognition rates by country



Additionally, Figure 8 below demonstrates the share of final positive decisions on appeals against previous negative decisions on asylum applications:

Figure 8- Percentage of final positive decisions on asylum demand in European countries (2008-2017)



It can be observed that positive final decisions on appeals against the first distance decisions are on average quite low on EU level with 21% average during the past 10 years. Finland and Bulgaria were the only EU member countries that made more than 50% positive

final decisions on average during the past decade, followed by Netherlands, Italy and UK at 40th percentile; Greece and Austria averaging at 30th percentile; Romania, Denmark, Slovakia and Germany at 20th percentile yet above the EU mean level. All other 17 EU countries plus Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein had lower than 21% positive final decisions on appeals. One interesting pattern we can observe with this data is that despite the fluctuating first-instance recognition rates between years for different countries, the final decisions against appeals on previous asylum applications seem to not change a lot year-to-year. They seem to be mostly related to domestic migration policies of the member states rather than economic conditions in destination countries or changes in asylum inflows. By contrast, first-instance decisions show patterns that appear decreasing when economic conditions deteriorate (reflected by the lower recognition rates from 2008 to 2011 although total asylum applications increased) and increasing with rise in asylum applications. Since policy is considered to be a endogenous factor on number of asylum applications, its significance validated by the research with empirical data regression mentioned in the literature review (see Sections 2.2, 2.4.2), destination countries may implement stricter asylum policies and processing in order to restrict and deter asylum inflows at times of recession due to higher unemployment, slow or decreasing growth, high inflation, etc. However, it should also be noted that, also mentioned in the literature review (see Sections 2.3, 2.4.2), processing of asylum applications and asylum policy are not only related to economic factors and can also be influenced by sociopolitical and cultural factors. We can observe that asylum inflows and recognition rates tend to be lower in countries and/or periods when the incumbent governments are politically oriented in favor of anti-immigration policies.

Figure 9 - Average annual recognition rates for asylum applications in the EU

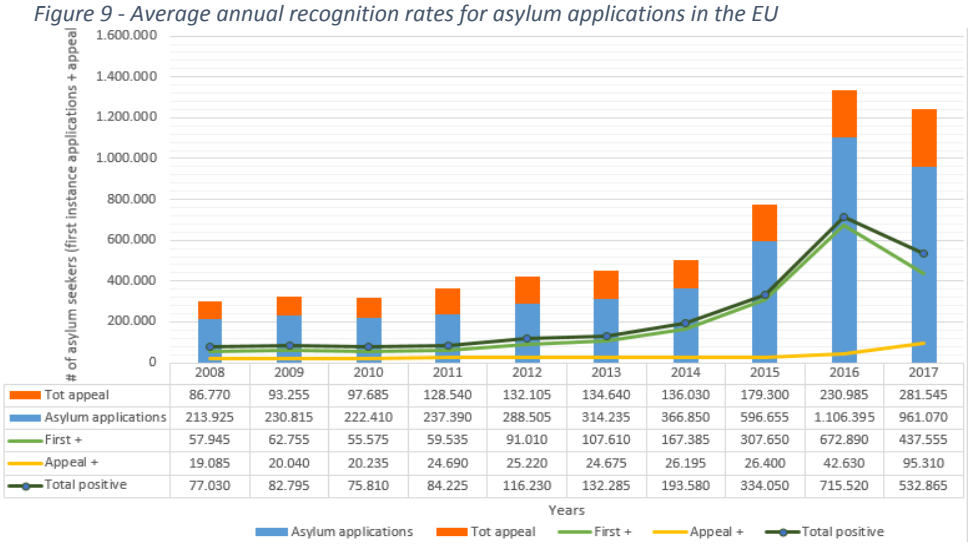


Table 4 - Average annual recognition rates for asylum applications in EU

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average
Total first - instance recognition rate (%)	27.09	27.19	24.99	25.08	31.55	34.25	45.63	51.56	60.82	45.53	37.37
Total positive / total first applications + total appeals (%)	25.62	25.55	23.68	23.02	27.63	29.47	38.49	43.05	53.50	42.88	33.29

Lastly, Figure 9 above demonstrates total number first-instance asylum applications and total number of appeals against previous decisions on a stacked-bar chart, combined with first instance positive decisions, final positive decisions and total of first-instance and final decisions on a curve graph in order to observe 10-year trends of correlation between the total number of asylum applications and relevant decisions on these applications, coupled with percentages for these trends on Table 4.

The blue section of the stacked bars indicates the annual total number of the asylum applications made at or within the borders of the all EU member states. The orange section of the stacked bars indicates the annual total number of appeals made against first-instance asylum applications for all EU countries altogether. On the other hand, the light green line demonstrates the number of first-instance positive decisions made for the asylum applications shown on blue part of the graph. The yellow line shows the final positive decisions made on appeals against first-instance decisions. The middle row of Table 4 shows the total recognition rates as an EU average based on first-instance applications for asylum for each year, and the final row is the percentage of positive final decisions made for appeals.

It is apparent from this table that recognition rates for both first-instance applications and final decisions decreased in 2010 and 2011, and gradually increased until peaking in 2016, and decreased modestly in 2017. By contrast, the number of asylum applications (only except for 2010) and number of appeals (peaking in 2017, rather than 2016; and also, the share of positive final decisions is at their peak in 2017) are observed to be steadily increasing over the past decade. It should be noted that although asylum flows reached their peak in 2015, most of the decisions made for these applications were processed in 2016 and 2017. Since final decisions on appeal applications are pending from even a longer time period, time lag should be taken into consideration when interpreting these figures. However, for the most part we can see that recognition rates and upsurges in asylum flows are in correlation, which can also be interpreted that as when applicants from origin countries make up most of the applications (refugees from Syria following the civil war starting in 2015 in particular) this can be reflected as an increase in recognition rates. Nonetheless, the figures we have analyzed in this study also points out the effects of economic factors in destination countries, social and political factors as influential factors on bilateral asylum flows and admission rates of these asylum applications. Further research on this area needs to be done in order to investigate and precisely demonstrate the links between these figures; and whether the fluctuations on recognition rates are related to decreasing volume of conflicts, or different influential sociopolitical and economic factors.

PART III – EMPIRICAL TEST ON BILATERAL ASYLUM FLOWS

CHAPTER 6 – Empirical test on bilateral asylum flows

As mentioned in the literature review, to date, various methods have been developed and introduced to analyze both origin and destination specific factors that influence the volume and direction of the bilateral asylum flows. Some studies have used more qualitative methods based on case studies and their comparisons. On the other hand, others have analyzed quantitative data and a lot of them combined the two. The findings of these previous studies were discussed in the Part I of this paper.

The most common quantitative approach that is employed in order to explain these flows is by using regression models in order to control for different explanatory variables that may be influential on these flows. As discussed in the literature review, there are several studies (see Hatton 2012, 2016a, 2017; Burmann et al., 2017) that discovered the significance of these origin and destination-specific variables, and although they might minimally differ due to different sampling and year-to-year differences, for the most part, they have obtained similar results that validate each other. This part of the thesis analyzes the findings which emerged from the statistical analysis presented in the previous chapter. In this section, there will be some of the findings of the empirical research presented as a result of the analysis based on a similar model that has been used in the previous literature.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows: Section 6.1 introduces the data used in the empirical test. Section 6.2 presents the econometric model specification. Finally, Section 6.3 discusses the findings of the experiment.

6.1 - The data

The main data on this empirical research are based on the same data set that has been used in Chapter 5. The statistics on the number of asylum applications are obtained from UNHCR Population Statistics database on asylum seekers, but under the category on asylum seekers and refugee status determination instead of time series statistics that are used to illustrate the figures on refugee stock. These statistics on asylum seekers and their refugee status determination results that are used in this experiment contain the number of applications from any origin country to 28 EU destination countries from the year 2002 to 2017, along with the number of decisions where asylum seekers are recognized as a refugee, number of decisions where they are admitted in other humanitarian grounds (both of these two numbers are combined as the number of total positive decisions), number of decisions that are rejected, number of applications that are otherwise closed (after the appeal process), and also the number of total decisions made that year in that destination country for the asylum seekers from the origin country. The data set also includes the number of applications pending at the beginning and the end of the year. The ratio of the decisions made that year for the specific country pair to the total number of decisions were generated in order to obtain percentages of positive decisions, negative decisions and closed

cases; in order to obtain admission rates for each country pairs in each year. In order to avoid endogeneity, the number of applications from each origin country to 28 EU destination countries in each year were subtracted from the total number of first-instance asylum applications (obtained from Eurostat population database) made to each of these 28 EU countries, which included into the estimations as an independent variable. Furthermore, the analysis also includes the log of real GDP of the 28 destination countries for each year (2002-2017), generated from the statistics of the World Bank database. Lastly, an average recognition rate obtained by dividing the total positive first-instance decisions to the total number of asylum applications made in 28 EU countries from 2008-2017 was also incorporated, which is also retrieved from the Eurostat database. Our main specification encompasses all origin-destination dyads from all origin countries to 28 EU countries that has any number of applications other than zero during the time period between 2002 to 2017. This empirical analysis is based on a database compromising 59 336 observations, with country pairs of 28 EU destination countries and 223 origin country specifications spanning time period from 2002 to 2017. Since the existing literature already offers extensive findings on origin-specific variables that may influence refugee migration whose robustness are checked multiple times and validated by different studies, in order to test for consequences of economic circumstances and asylum policy; this research is focused on parameters concerning destination-specific variables of the 28-member states of the European Union in particular.

6.2 – Econometric model specification

In order to assess the significance of different explanatory variables on the volume of bilateral asylum flows – the number of asylum applicants from origin country i, applying for asylum at or within the borders of the destination country j, at time t, the model that is used in all estimations can be expressed as follows:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha(Y_{jt} - Y_{ijt}) + \sum_{k=1}^{8} \binom{8}{1} \beta_k(\beta_1 PGS_{ijt}, \beta_2 PGE_{ijt}, \beta_3 P_{jt}, \beta_4 \log GDP_{jt}, \beta_5 TP_{ijt}, \beta_6 P_{ijt}, \beta_7 R_{ijt}, \beta_8 C_{ijt}) + \sigma_{ijt} + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

Expression (1) – Econometric model specification

The dependent variable (Y_{ijt}) represents the number of first-time asylum applications from origin country i to destination country j at time t. The independent variables are: yearly dyadic asylum applications from origin i in destination country j subtracted from the yearly total number of asylum applications in the destination country ($\alpha(Y_{ijt} - Y_{ijt})$ included in all estimations in order to avoid endogeneity; and 8 other independent variables that are used together, separately or in different combinations in different estimations which are: the number of the dyadic pending applications in the beginning of the year t from origin country i in destination country j ($\beta_1 PGS_{ijt}$), the number of dyadic pending applications

remaining at the end of the year t from origin country i in destination country j ($\beta_2 PGE_{ij}$), the overall recognition rate for all asylum applications made in destination country j at year t ($\beta_3 P_{jt}$), the log of annual real GDP of the destination country j at year t ($\beta_4 logGDP_{jt}$), the dyadic total number of positive decisions for asylum applications from origin country i in destination country j at year t ($\beta_5 TP_{ijt}$), the dyadic recognition rate percentage for asylum applications from origin country i in destination country j at year t ($\beta_6 P_{ijt}$), the dyadic rejection rate percentage for asylum applications from origin country i in destination country j at year t ($\beta_7 R_{ijt}$), and the dyadic percentage of closed applications upon appeal for asylum applications from origin country I in destination country j at year t ($\beta_8 C_{ijt}$). We run the estimations on a multiple fixed effect regression which absorbs origin-specific, destination-specific and time-specific fixed effects for robustness to heteroskedasticity, with results adjusted for clusters according to destination-specific fixed effects.

6.3 – Test results

These variables were incorporated into the multiple fixed-effect linear regression based on the model specified in the previous section to predict the significance of these independent variables on the dependent variable, which is the number of first-time asylum applications from origin country I to destination country j at time t. By using the same econometric model specification, multiple different regression estimates were generated by using different combinations of independent variables. Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7 present the experimental data which are the results of this regression analysis. Table 5 below displays the results obtained after regressing all the independent variables shown in the model regressed together. Furthermore, Table 6 on the next page presents selected 12 estimates generated by the model. Consequently, a larger set of results compromising 96 other different regression estimates as different possible combinations of the explanatory variables are presented in Table 7 on page 42. Results are discussed starting from page 43.

Table 5 – Empirical test results of the regression analysis with all independent variables in the model regressed together

				# of observations	13 988
# of clusters (des)	28	*** p<0.001		F (8, 27)	18 845.90
SE adjusted for	28 clusters	** p<0.01		Prob > F	0.0000
Origin FE	167	* p<0.05		R-squared	0.8567
Destination FE	28			Adj. R-squared	0.8545
Year FE	10			Within R-sq.	0.8490
				Root MSE	1294.1858

DV: Yijt	Coefficient	Robust SE	t	P>|t|	95% Confidence	Interval
ajtaijt	***.0002929	.000103	2.84	0.008	.0000815	.0005044
PGSijt	***-.349	.0647731	-5.39	0.000	-.4822833	-.2164766
PGEijt	***.6894094	.596272	11.56	0.000	.5670645	.8117543
Pjt	-154.398	79.02683	-1.95	0.061	-316.5476	7.751696
LGDP	*-472.5577	225.089	-2.10	0.045	-934.4022	-10.71317
TPijt	***.9036853	.0175195	51.58	0.000	.8677382	.9396325
Pijt	59.76418	146.3293	0.41	0.686	-240.4787	360.007
Rijt	191.4068	160.8407	1.19	0.244	-138.6111	521.4246
Cijt	0	(omitted)				
_cons	12750.7	6023.581	2.12	0.044	391.3295	25110.07

Table 6 - Empirical test results of the regression analysis with 12 selected estimates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
ajtaijt	0.000821*	-0.000123	0.000801	-0.000141	0.000819	-0.000116
	(2.06)	(-0.31)	(1.90)	(-0.34)	(1.95)	(-0.28)
PGSijt	0.883**		0.883***		0.881***	
	(3.68)		(3.73)		(3.73)	
Pjt	28.33	37.51	94.98	108.8	44.26	68.31
	(0.28)	(0.47)	(0.89)	(1.07)	(0.40)	(0.78)
LGDP	-374.7	-869.7	-455.3	-945.0	-432.4	-936.4
	(-1.49)	(-1.93)	(-1.63)	(-1.88)	(-1.62)	(-1.87)
Pijt	321.2	384.1				
	(1.44)	(1.55)				
PGEijt		0.991***		0.991***		0.989***
		(6.18)		(6.23)		(6.27)
Rijt			59.67	74.32	-232.6	-281.6
			(0.82)	(1.35)	(-1.43)	(-1.52)
Cijt					-465.6	-562.7
					(-1.54)	(-1.70)
TPijt						
_cons	10015.1	23303.8	12179.7	25340.1	11867.3	25465.1
	(1.50)	(1.94)	(1.65)	(1.89)	(1.64)	(1.88)
N	16904	16481	17254	16810	17057	16619
	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
ajtaijt	-0.000138	0.00110***	-0.000127	-0.000155	-0.000138	0.000291**
	(-0.32)	(13.14)	(-0.31)	(-0.33)	(-0.32)	(2.81)
PGSijt		0.0788		0.334		-0.350***
		(0.84)		(1.47)		(-5.40)
Pjt	111.8	-139.8	62.19	29.94	111.8	-143.5
	(1.10)	(-1.12)	(0.69)	(0.27)	(1.10)	(-1.97)
LGDP	-932.7	38.79	-887.6	-1309.7	-932.7	-467.0*
	(-1.83)	(0.22)	(-1.89)	(-1.82)	(-1.83)	(-2.08)
Pijt		-53.07	568.5	623.6		60.67
		(-0.75)	(1.69)	(1.96)		(0.41)
PGEijt	0.990***		0.990***	0.816***	0.990***	0.689***
	(6.27)		(6.21)	(10.44)	(6.27)	(11.56)
Rijt			288.3	304.1*		191.5
			(1.82)	(2.38)		(1.19)
Cijt	-346.5				-346.5	
	(-1.81)				(-1.81)	
TPijt		0.960***				0.904***
		(26.31)				(51.34)
_cons	25137.5	-851.4	23582.7	34933.9	25137.5	12598.8*
	(1.83)	(-0.18)	(1.88)	(1.82)	(1.83)	-2.1
N	16699	16904	16405	14083	16699	14083
t statistics in parentheses						
="* p<0.05	** p<0.01	*** p<0.001"				

		ajtaijt		PGSijt		PGEijt		Pjt		LGDP		TPijt		Pijt		Rijt		Cijt		cons		N
(1)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00137***	(6.57)	0.517***	(4.17)															48.96*	(2.39)	28861
(2)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000746***	(4.07)			0.626***	(7.39)													41.31**	(3.07)	30067
(3)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000549*	(2.11)	-0.00555	(-0.05)	0.722***	(10.34)													38.89	(1.31)	23798
(4)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000925*	(2.37)	0.858**	(3.60)			111.7	(1.14)											-19.92	(-0.33)	20059
(5)	Aijt_ofapp	0.0000747	(0.21)			0.965***	(5.88)	119.3	(1.15)											-32.54	(-0.57)	20923
(6)	Aijt_ofapp	0.0000180	(0.04)	0.313	(1.39)	0.802***	(9.98)	150.7	(1.06)											-73.21	(-0.78)	16616
(7)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00160***	(17.79)					-52.12	(-0.54)											124.1***	(3.78)	39146
(8)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00138***	(6.63)	0.517***	(4.18)					-184.3	(-1.36)									4962.8	(1.38)	28793
(9)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000750***	(4.08)			0.626***	(7.40)			-222.2*	(-2.31)									5966.3*	(2.32)	29987
(10)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000750***	(4.08)			0.626***	(7.40)			-222.2*	(-2.31)									5966.3*	(2.32)	29987
(11)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000556*	(2.12)	-0.00537	(-0.05)	0.722***	(10.36)			-300.1*	(-2.41)									8071.9*	(2.43)	23736
(12)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000965*	(2.57)	0.859**	(3.60)			92.74	(1.00)	-412.6	(-2.02)									11051.3	(2.03)	20059
(13)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000134	(0.37)			0.966***	(5.90)	94.07	(0.96)	-766.2*	(-2.21)									20540.1*	(2.21)	20923
(14)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000106	(0.24)	0.314	(1.40)	0.803***	(10.07)	106.7	(0.84)	-1133.2*	(-2.18)									30459.8*	(2.19)	16616
(15)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00160***	(16.40)					-52.47	(-0.52)	-4.553	(-0.02)									246.4	(0.05)	39145
(16)	Aijt_ofapp									90.55	(0.73)									-2265.6	(-0.68)	57975
(17)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00173***	(17.32)							83.38	(0.82)									-2129.2	(-0.79)	57761
(18)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00108***	(24.21)	0.0490	(1.04)							0.976***	(52.99)							93.56***	(10.38)	28353
(19)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000567***	(12.26)			0.326***	(9.40)					0.887***	(40.64)							54.12***	(9.22)	29558
(20)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000388***	(5.13)	-0.397***	(-7.79)	0.629***	(11.35)					0.944***	(70.82)							91.81***	(15.95)	23330
(21)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00113***	(15.11)	0.0770	(0.86)			-126.0	(-1.36)			0.962***	(27.30)							145.5**	(3.59)	19563
(22)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000301***	(3.71)			0.537***	(11.47)	-69.76	(-1.26)			0.816***	(34.69)							59.43**	(3.11)	20425
(23)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000388***	(5.21)	-0.397***	(-7.78)	0.629***	(11.35)			2.294	(0.02)	0.944***	(70.56)							30.64	(0.01)	23268
(24)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000396***	(5.15)	-0.355***	(-5.54)	0.681***	(11.56)	-121.0*	(-2.49)			0.909***	(52.17)							121.5***	(5.84)	16159
(25)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000959***	(11.41)							70.41	(0.98)	1.000***	(109.64)							-1803.4	(-0.94)	57110
(26)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00108***	(24.30)	0.0489	(1.04)					47.36	(0.61)	0.976***	(52.91)							-1168.6	(-0.57)	28285
(27)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000568***	(12.09)			0.326***	(9.39)			-61.80	(-0.86)	0.887***	(40.60)							1701.4	(0.89)	29478
(28)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00114***	(16.63)	0.0771	(0.86)			-128.2	(-1.36)	-50.66	(-0.41)	0.962***	(27.28)							1504.2	(0.45)	19563
(29)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000342***	(3.74)			0.537***	(11.58)	-85.56	(-1.42)	-497.7**	(-2.87)	0.816***	(34.71)							13414.9**	(2.88)	20425
(30)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000435***	(4.70)	-0.354***	(-5.52)	0.682***	(11.61)	-138.5*	(-2.32)	-472.1*	(-2.64)	0.909***	(52.09)							12833.0*	(2.66)	16159
(31)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000994***	(14.01)					-147.9	(-1.79)	-77.29	(-0.55)	0.995***	(107.31)							2202.7	(0.58)	38506
(32)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000959***	(11.41)							70.41	(0.98)	1.000***	(109.64)							-1803.4	(-0.94)	57110
(33)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000960***	(11.59)									1.000***	(109.63)							78.38***	(28.12)	57219
(34)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000935	(1.97)	0.749**	(2.90)									336.9	(1.65)					0.574	(0.01)	24175
(35)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000662	(-0.13)			0.893***	(4.50)							349.3	(1.77)					-1.908	(-0.03)	23396
(36)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000137	(-0.23)	0.219	(0.92)	0.768***	(8.22)							422.4	(1.98)					-29.16	(-0.33)	19951
(37)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000790	(1.90)	0.883**	(3.68)			42.36	(0.42)					322.1	(1.44)					-22.96	(-0.29)	16904
(38)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000178	(-0.45)			0.990***	(6.16)	56.55	(0.71)					385.6	(1.56)					-46.53	(-0.52)	16481
(39)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000226	(-0.47)	0.333	(1.47)	0.815***	(10.29)	42.45	(0.39)					429.8	(1.68)					-83.60	(-0.72)	14145
(40)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00181***	(17.38)					-35.58	(-0.29)					282.7	(1.24)					117.1	(1.77)	27028
(41)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000937	(1.98)	0.750**	(2.90)					-151.5	(-0.70)			336.1	(1.65)					4030.8	(0.70)	24120
(42)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000667	(-0.13)			0.893***	(4.50)			-136.4	(-1.07)			348.1	(1.77)					3634.4	(1.07)	23328
(43)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000137	(-0.23)	0.219	(0.92)	0.768***	(8.22)			-287.9	(-1.33)			420.3	(1.98)					7664.3	(1.34)	19898
(44)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000821*	(2.06)	0.883**	(3.68)			28.33	(0.28)	-374.7	(-1.49)			321.2	(1.44)					10015.1	(1.50)	16904
(45)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000123	(-0.31)			0.991***	(6.18)	37.51	(0.47)	-869.7	(-1.93)			384.1	(1.55)					23303.8	(1.94)	16481
(46)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000146	(-0.32)	0.334	(1.47)	0.816***	(10.39)	4.188	(0.04)	-1279.6	(-1.85)			430.5	(1.69)					34334.4	(1.86)	14145
(47)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00181***	(15.98)					-36.59	(-0.29)	30.21	(-0.12)			282.6	(1.23)					928.2	(0.13)	27028
(48)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00208***	(18.19)							98.91	(0.72)			179.0	(0.89)					-2537.7	(-0.69)	42001
(49)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00208***	(18.27)											178.8	(0.89)					105.3**	(3.31)	42092
(50)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000934	(2.01)	0.750**	(2.93)											40.07	(0.62)			32.67	(0.48)	24532
(51)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000621	(-0.12)			0.894***	(4.52)									76.17	(1.32)			11.31	(0.21)	23730
(52)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000139	(-0.23)	0.219	(0.94)	0.768***	(8.19)									78.70	(1.39)			-3.222	(-0.04)	20290
(53)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000765	(1.75)	0.882***	(3.72)			112.4	(1.00)							58.42	(0.82)			-22.84	(-0.25)	17254
(54)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000196	(-0.47)			0.990***	(6.21)	129.7	(1.15)							72.46	(1.37)			-44.43	(-0.53)	16810
(55)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000260	(-0.52)	0.333	(1.48)	0.815***	(10.25)	142.6	(1.01)							70.04	(1.57)			-78.96	(-0.80)	14476
(56)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00181***	(15.27)					21.67	(0.15)							66.62	(0.71)			109.2	(1.35)	27375
(57)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000936	(2.02)	0.750**	(2.93)					-187.8	(-0.96)					40.49	(0.62)			5031.8	(0.97)	24477
(58)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000631	(-0.12)			0.894***	(4.53)			-180.7	(-1.82)					76.24	(1.31)			4831.3	(1.83)	23662
(59)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000139	(-0.23)	0.219	(0.94)	0.768***	(8.20)			-337.9	(-1.70)					79.23	(1.36)			9030.6	(1.71)	20237
(60)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000801	(1.90)	0.883***	(3.73)			94.98	(0.89)	-455.3	(-1.63)					59.67	(0.82)			12179.7	(1.65)	17254
(61)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000141	(-0.34)			0.991***	(6.23)	108.8	(1.07)	-945.0	(-1.88)					74.32	(1.35)			25340.1	(1.89)	16810
(62)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000181	(-0.38)	0.333	(1.49)	0.816***	(10.36)	103.1	(0.83)	-1339.4	(-1.82)					71.83	(1.47)			35966.2	(1.83)	14476
(63)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00181***	(14.34)					18.69	(0.13)	-84.22	(-0.38)					66.76	(0.71)			2371.1	(0.39)	27375
(64)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00209***	(20.30)							81.02	(0.63)					53.90	(0.82)			-2060.8	(-0.60)	42352
(65)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00209***	(20.38)													53.63	(0.82)			104.7**	(2.89)	42443
(66)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000945	(1.99)	0.749**	(2.93)											-266.3	(-1.68)	-461.4	(-1.72)	331.3*	(2.53)	24328
(67)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000487	(-0.09)			0.892***	(4.54)									-264.3	(-1.76)	-506.7	(-1.94)	341.5*	(2.57)	23532
(68)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000121	(-0.20)	0.218	(0.93)	0.768***	(8.26)									-322.6	(-1.95)	-592.1*	(-2.25)	383.8**	(3.09)	20111
(69)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000945	(2.01)	0.749**	(2.93)													-251.5	(-1.71)	123.8***	(4.98)	24406
(70)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000462	(-0.09)			0.893***	(4.54)											-296.6*	(-2.09)	135.0***	(4.74)	23616
(71)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000783	(1.80)	0.881***	(3.73)			60.98	(0.54)							-234.0	(-1.43)	-466.0	(-1.53)	282.0	(1.85)	17057
(72)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000759	(1.69)	0.881***	(3.74)			102.1	(0.93)									-286.7	(-1.55)	90.44*	(2.15)	17132
(73)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000173	(-0.42)			0.989***	(6.24)	89.94	(0.93)							-283.7	(-1.53)	-563.3	(-1.70)	317.3*	(2.08)	16619
(74)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000195	(-0.46)			0.989***	(6.24)	134.1	(1.18)									-346.1	(-1.82)	87.05**	(2.94)	16699
(75)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000233	(-0.47)	0.332	(1.48)	0.814***	(10.33)	70.16	(0.57)							-315.1	(-1.56)	-606.6	(-1.99)	321.5*	(2.14)	14304
(76)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000265	(-0.52)	0.332	(1.48)	0.814***	(10.31)	132.6	(0.97)									-365.4*	(-2.35)	62.68	(0.95)	14370
(77)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00183***	(15.56)					-8.178	(-0.06)							-213.4	(-1.31)	-436.6	(-1.24)	392.0*	(2.27)	27107
(78)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00182***	(14.67)					21.10	(0.15)									-275.1	(-1.16)	219.4**	(3.36)	27226
(79)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000947	(1.99)	0.749**	(2.93)					-176.2	(-0.88)					-265.3	(-1.68)	-460.4	(-1.72)	5020.9	(0.94)	24273
(80)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000947	(2.01)	0.749**	(2.93)					-180.0	(-0.93)							-251.1	(-1.71)	4915.8	(0.95)	24351
(81)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000496	(-0.10)			0.893***	(4.54)			-152.7	(-1.33)					-263.0	(-1.75)	-505.1	(-1.93)	4413.7	(1.44)	23464
(82)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.0000472	(-0.09)			0.893***	(4.54)			-163.1	(-1.54)							-295.9*	(-2.08)	4486.1	(1.59)	23548
(83)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000121	(-0.20)	0.218	(0.93)	0.768***	(8.27)			-306.9	(-1.49)					-320.3	(-1.96)	-589.3*	(-2.25)	8585.2	(1.55)	20058
(84)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000122	(-0.20)	0.219	(0.94)	0.768***	(8.25)			-316.5	(-1.58)							-334.7*	(-2.52)	8591.9	(1.61)	20126
(85)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000819	(1.95)	0.881***	(3.73)			44.26	(0.40)	-432.4	(-1.62)					-232.6	(-1.43)	-465.6	(-1.54)	11867.3	(1.64)	17057
(86)	Aijt_ofapp	0.000794	(1.82)	0.882***	(3.74)			85.02	(0.80)	-430.9	(-1.65)							-287.2	(-1.54)	11637.9	(1.66)	17132
(87)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000116	(-0.28)			0.989***	(6.27)	68.31	(0.78)	-936.4	(-1.87)					-281.6	(-1.52)	-562.7	(-1.70)	25465.1	(1.88)	16619
(88)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000138	(-0.32)			0.990***	(6.27)	111.8	(1.10)	-932.7	(-1.83)							-346.5	(-1.81)	25137.5	(1.83)	16699
(89)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000151	(-0.32)	0.332	(1.48)	0.815***	(10.44)	29.28	(0.26)	-1337.2	(-1.84)					-314.6	(-1.56)	-608.6	(-2.00)	36301.5	(1.85)	14304
(90)	Aijt_ofapp	-0.000186	(-0.37)	0.332	(1.48)	0.815***	(10.42)	92.09	(0.77)	-1310.4	(-1.81)							-366.8*	(-2.34)	35322.8	(1.82)	14370
(91)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00183***	(14.56)					-11.49	(-0.09)	-92.26	(-0.38)					-213.2	(-1.31)	-436.5	(-1.24)	2869.2	(0.45)	27107
(92)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00183***	(13.81)					17.19	(0.12)	-108.3	(-0.46)							-275.2	(-1.16)	3127.7	(0.50)	27226
(93)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00209***	(18.19)							86.94	(0.67)					-135.0	(-0.81)	-294.4	(-1.07)	-2033.7	(-0.59)	42077
(94)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00210***	(19.77)							90.01	(0.63)							-189.0	(-1.18)	1953.3	(-0.57)	42201
(95)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00209***	(18.19)							86.94	(0.67)					-135.0	(-0.81)	-294.4	(-1.07)	-2033.7	(-0.59)	42077
(96)	Aijt_ofapp	0.00210***	(19.86)															-188.7	(-1.18)	184.7***	(4.15)	42292

Table 7 - Empirical test results of the regression analysis with different combinations of 96 estimates

There are some interesting results obtained from this regression analysis. Perhaps the most interesting one is that, as can be seen from the results presented above in Table 5, 6 and 7; the number of dyadic pending applications remaining in the end of the year t from origin country i in destination country j (PGE_{ijt}) takes a very significantly positive coefficient at $p < 0.001$ in all combinations. From this, we can suggest that strong evidence is found for number of pending applications at the end of the year resulting from backlog of applications has a significant increasing effect on the number of applications. Based on the results presented in Table 5 where all explanatory variables are regressed together, we can see that a 10% increase in number of pending applications at the end of the year is observed to increase the dyadic number of applications by around 6.9%. According to the results obtained in Table 7 based on 96 estimates, which also include other estimates that are regressed in different combinations, based on 47 different estimates we observe that the mean coefficient for these estimates correlate to an average of 8% increase in number of applications for a 10% increase in number of pending applications at the end of the year in destination country j for the applications from country i at time t.

Based on these premises, the coefficient on the number of dyadic pending applications at the beginning of the year t from origin country i in destination country j (PGS_{ijt}) is also very significantly positive in most of the combinations. In the regression presented in Table 5, this variable takes a negative coefficient, but it should be noted that this is highly likely due to its high collinearity with (PGE_{ijt}). When this variable on the number of pending applications at the beginning of the year is regressed without the other, it is observed that its coefficient becomes significantly positive at $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.001$ levels. Furthermore, in all different estimations, we observe that the coefficient on (PGE_{ijt}) is always larger than (PGS_{ijt}) in all specifications, and in some instances, even when (PGS_{ijt}) is regressed alone, we observe that its significance drops to 1% level instead of 0.1%. Thus, the coefficient on the number of pending applications at the end of the year (PGE_{ijt}) being very strongly positively significant in all cases, but the coefficient on the number of pending applications at the beginning of the year (PGS_{ijt}) not being significant or taking a negative coefficient when regressed with (PGE_{ijt}) appears to suggest that; although the number of pending applications both in the beginning and the end of the year, (PGS_{ijt}) and (PGE_{ijt}), observed to significantly increase the number of applications, the number of pending applications at the end of the year (PGE_{ijt}) is a more influential variable on the dependent variable (the dyadic number of asylum applications) than the latter.

If we now turn to other explanatory variables, we observe that the variable on the overall recognition rate for all asylum applications made in destination country j at year t (P_{jt}), appears to be insignificant on our dependent variable (Y_{ijt}) which is the number of asylum applications from origin country i in destination country j at time t. This finding is surprising because the findings of Hatton (2017) that incorporates recognition rate into their analysis reported a modest positive effect of recognition rate on total number of applications which reports a correlation of 10% increase in recognition rates increasing the

number of applications by 2%. Yet, the explanation for this divergence is likely to be related to the differences in the specifications in the model, the sample of origin and destination countries that are being used, origin country fixed effects, and most likely due to country pairs with very low number of applications being dropped from the sample in that of Hatton (2017). All possible country pairs with 28 EU destination countries being included in the database used for this experiment might be an explanation for this finding. This finding seems to validate the findings of the literature that, no matter how deterrent policy on access and processing may be, the adverse circumstances in origin countries where refugees emigrate from are the most important factors that determine the volume and direction of bilateral asylum flows.

The findings on destination country log of real GDP ($logGDP_{jt}$) being insignificant on the number of asylum applications in most, if not all the specifications also validate the findings of the literature mentioned in the literature review (Hatton, 2016a; Hatton, 2017). The coefficients on log of GDP appears insignificant in 44 estimations out of 51. Although their findings validate almost all of findings that of Hatton (2016a), in the research of Burmann et al. (2017) it is mentioned that: "Interestingly, in contrast to Hatton (2016), our results which are based on a different sample of countries indicate that a higher GDP per capita in the destination country is associated with fewer asylum applications." In some of the specifications of our estimates which are 7 out of 51, we observe that the variable takes a negative coefficient once at 1% and 6 times at 5%. This may initially seem like less attractiveness of richer countries, or richer countries being more restrictive for asylum, however an explanation for this may be the cost of living also being also higher in countries with higher GDP per capita, thus decreasing their attractiveness. Yet, for the most part, in line with the findings that of Hatton (2016a and 2017), the GDP per capita in destination countries is not a significant variable influencing bilateral asylum flows. The assumptions on richer countries being more restrictive in policy, or countries adopting stricter policies according to economic conditions; are arguments of different topic that are not covered in this paper and requires further research.

The variable on the number of dyadic total positive decisions made in destination country j for applicants from origin i at time t (TP_{ijt}) is very significant and positive in all specifications. Its correlation with the dependent variable is at 80%. The number of total positive decisions are a very significantly positive variable on the dependent variable, yet this may be considered as an endogeneity issue.

Surprisingly, there were no significant effects for the dyadic acceptance and rejection rates (P_{ijt}) (R_{ijt}). Considering these results, it appears that acceptance and rejection rates appear to be insignificant on the dependent variable. Finally, the last variable is (C_{ijt}) which is the number of closed applications after the denial of appeals. In 24 estimations out of 31 where it is incorporated, it is insignificant. Only in 7 specifications when regressed together with the number of pending applications at the end of the year (PGE_{ijt}), we observe that it

is negatively significant at 5% level. The correlation between (PGE_{ijt}) and (C_{ijt}) is very low at less than 1%. Interestingly, when (C_{ijt}) is regressed together with dyadic acceptance rates (P_{ijt}), the results are automatically omitted, and their correlation is at -0.29. Yet, from these findings we can conclude that closed applications may have a very modest negative effect on applications, yet it is insignificant for the most part. All things considered, the data yielded by this study suggests that recognition rates do not seem to have a significant effect on number of asylum applications in destination countries.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the current study was to determine and analyze bilateral asylum flows and various factors in origin and destination countries that influence them. The theory that has been discussed in the literature review together with the findings of the empirical analysis may be considered as an informative source in order to provide possible solutions for the refugee problem of the world. As discussed in Hatton (2012), contrary to the fact that most of the current refugee stock is located in poor and middle-income countries, it is important to note that "the time profile of the flow of asylum applications to the West is similar to that of the total stock of refugees (see Figure 2, Hatton, 2012)." For this reason, the essential factors that cause displacement within the third world is also a determinant indicator of asylum migration to the West. Since the recent migration trends are very likely to continue with increasing immigration pressure (Dao et al., 2018), reforms on asylum and migration policies should be taken serious in order to preserve and improve economic, social, and political stability in both developing and developed countries.

In the light of the literature review and empirical analysis, we can unfortunately suggest that the current asylum system is not perfect. Possible solutions on the future of the asylum policy is exemplified in the work undertaken by Hatton (2012 and 2017). As mentioned in the literature review (Sections 3.1.1, 3.1.2 - Hatton, 2017), public opinion in Europe is increasingly in favor for legal migrants and genuine refugees. As mentioned in Section 3.1.6, there is also growing support in EU countries in favor of an EU-level migration and asylum policy. However, most Europeans are strongly against illegal immigrants (Section 3.1.7) and this is an important issue to take into consideration because since most asylum seekers enter unauthorized, strengthening border controls to minimize unauthorized entry is a priority in order to implement a reform on asylum policy which would be more likely to raise public support. Substantially increased border control enforcement and combat against people-smuggling networks are crucial in order to deter illegal immigration in order to gain public support for new asylum policies, and to reduce incentives of refugees to undertake irregular migration routes which involve perilous conditions. Although most applicants originate from countries that are affected by civil wars and human rights abuse, during the last 10 years, on average less than 38% (see Section 5.5.2) of asylum seekers in Europe are recognized as refugees or otherwise accepted as in need of protection. Increased border enforcement would reduce the asylum applicants that fail to gain refugee status, many of whom become illegal immigrants facing exploitation at hands of smugglers. However, these measures may also prevent genuine refugees, therefore Hatton (2017) suggests strengthening border controls should be accompanied by resettlement programs.

Although resettlement programs existed since decades, they have been on a small scale. The resettlement programs are executed according to predetermined quotas of developed countries, which consequently transfer refugees whose claims to refugee status

have been verified in advance, directly from camps in countries of first asylum without the involvement of unauthorized migration. However, a well-developed resettlement mechanism requires cooperation with member states facing exceptionally high levels of asylum demand, and with other countries outside the EU. For instance, the agreement signed between the EU and Turkey in March 2016 in order to close the migration route across the Aegean has been successful to cut down the numbers of irregular migration on this route in July 2016 to 3% of the number in July 2015 (Hatton, 2017). There are also more recent resettlement agreements between the EU member states and other countries neighboring the EU that are beginning of a series of intended agreements. A well-developed EU-level resettlement mechanism to support refugees hosted in refugee camps in poor countries would focus on asylum seekers with most urgent needs.

For a resettlement program to operate successfully, there should be more coordination between developed countries in order to increase the total capacity of developed countries to host refugees, for which there is also substantial public support (Hatton, 2016, c). Establishment of an effective burden-sharing mechanism would enable a more balanced distribution and therefore would increase overall hosting capacity of member states which would prioritize those with the most urgent needs whose applications are verified in advance, rather than the current 'spontaneous asylum seeking' system that encourages those that are able to undertake irregular travel through dangerous routes. The 'burden-sharing' mechanism that provides convergence in policy between member states would be targeted to resettle those with the most urgent needs into member states that can host them, with a 'matching mechanism' that would match refugees with the needs of the member states as optimal as possible. This matching mechanism would take account of preferences of refugees for host countries and of host countries for different types of refugees (see Fernandez-Huertas Moraga and Rapoport, 2015 - Hatton, 2017). This thoroughly detailed project is likely to be capable of addressing the shortcomings and inefficiencies of the current European asylum system.

In summary, expansion of overall capacity to host refugees by a more balanced distribution, maintaining public support by increased border control enforcement, and providing safe channels through a large-scale resettlement program are ultimately three essential key elements mentioned by Hatton (2017) for expanding the refugee-hosting capacity of developed countries. Together with integration measures on language, cultural, and labor market integration; these solutions would provide relief concerning economic and social pressure in developed countries. Yet, in comparison with the enormous numbers of displaced people in the world, successful integration of refugees into the country where they apply for asylum or into another developed country upon resettlement would only provide partial relief for a much larger scale problem. In order to address the refugee problem on a global scale, the fundamental solution is to generate solutions with the purpose to improve negative conditions in origin countries. Improving economic and other

influential factors such as political stability, freedom, democracy etc. in origin and transit countries would be the essential solution.

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