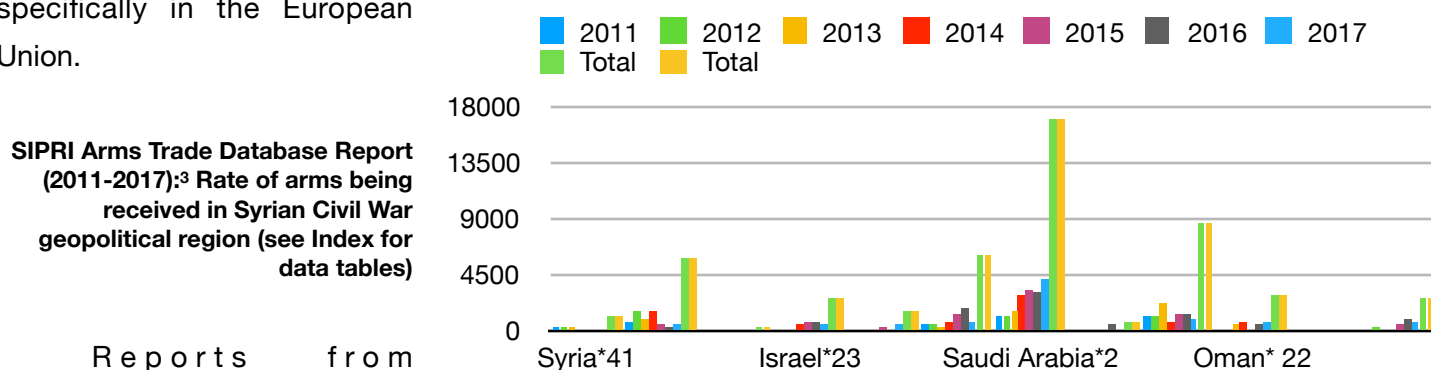


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## ARMS TRADE AND PRIVATIZATION OF WAR: Syrian Civil War

Cerena Ceaser

In 2017, the European Network Against Arms Trade, ENAAT, reported 156,169,041,376 euros in arms sales, with France being the largest supplier and Saudi Arabia the number one destination.<sup>1</sup> Since 2011, arms sales in Europe have increased over four times in profit, noting that the top highest selling items are aircraft and explosive devices. The Syrian Civil War began in 2011 and is on-going seven years later. According to ENAAT, arms spending is consistently reported low, peaking at just under seven million euros and bottoming out at under 150,000 euros, the value of the received goods is nearly 43.5 million euros and reflects three key aspects of the arms trade: 1) Spending on arms is made in advance of delivery, often by years; 2) The Common Position on Exports of Military Technology and Equipment, CEMTEQ, defines eight criteria for arms sales code of conduct encouraging human rights, transparency and disclosure of arms sales.<sup>2</sup> However, CEMTEQ is a treaty regularly found to be based on good intention rather than legal consequences.; And, 3) The flow of weapons within and into a conflict is enabled by regional and international actors with direct consequences on civilians and international security. An examination of the Syrian Civil War and key arms trade actors will provide a better understand how these three elements impact the arms trade. Additionally, the interconnection between states who sell arms and the fluctuations of refugees into them will also be examined in relationship to the on-going development of peace and security, specifically in the European Union.



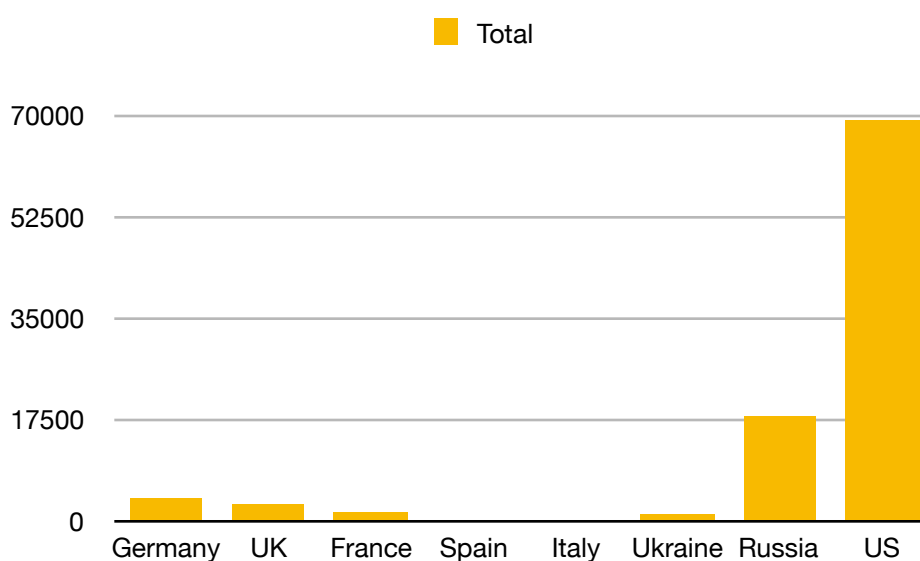
<sup>1</sup> ENAAT, 2018. *ENAAT: European Network Against Arms Trade*, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <http://enaat.org/eu-export-browser/licence.en.html>

<sup>2</sup> Pozo, Alejandro, 2018. *Economy and Conflict*. UOC, [print]. (p. 22-23)

<sup>3</sup> SIPRI, 2018. "SIPRI Arms Transfers Database." *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>

2011-2017 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI, show that within the geopolitical region of Syria, Saudi Arabia is the leader in arms purchasing. Followed by UAE, Turkey, Iraq, Oman, Israel, Qatar and Syria. In conducting this study, regional states were selected for their proximity to Syria (Lebanon, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Iraq). Additional states are identified through their role as regional proxies within the arms trade (Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE, Oman, Yemen, Qatar). In viewing the data, it is immediately clear that states with the lowest Global Peace Index in 2014, Syria (116), Iraq (152), Yemen (138), and Lebanon (137), also have the lowest reported money being spent on arms trade. Which immediately leads to the question: how are these countries becoming and maintaining militarization without investing? Syria is an example of how the influence of regional and international proxy states and the lack of international accountability may play a direct role in the discrepancy between recorded data of military spending and lived conflict between actors. Frequently, in SIPRI reports arms are ordered years prior to being delivered, or delivered within a range of years. Analyzing the relationship between the timeline of a state initially ordering arms, the eruption of violence, and when an order is delivered is of great interest. As this study focuses on the rate of arms sales and impact on civilians and security, the end year date of delivery has been used as the arm is guaranteed to be in service to violence as of that date. Additionally, distinctions between the type and degree of impact of arm being sold is not distinguished in this study, but demands additional attention.

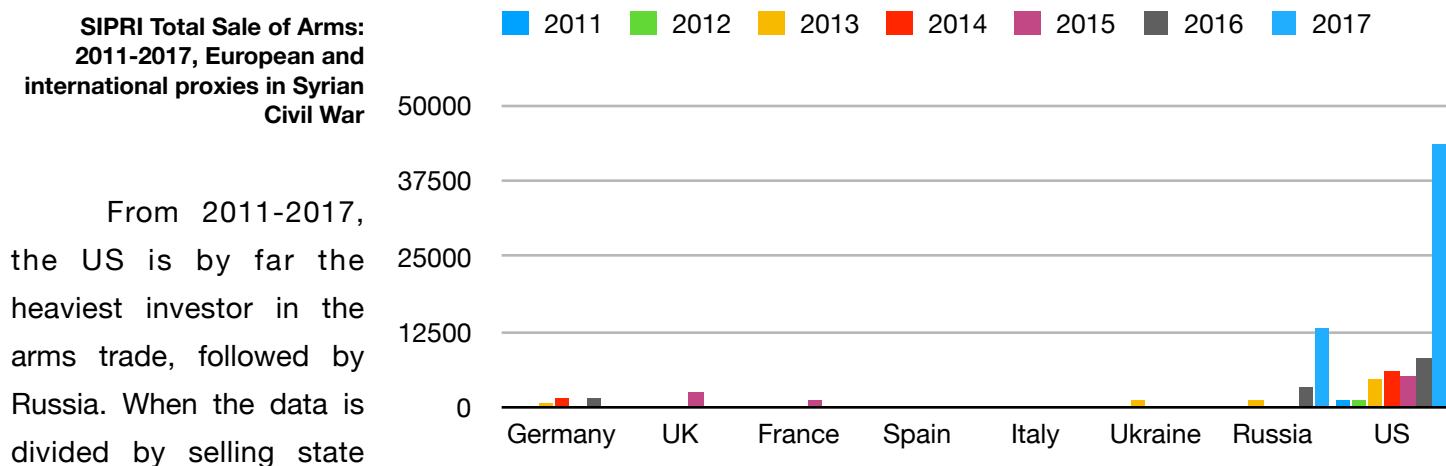
**SIPRI: Total Number of Arms (2011-2017) sold to Syrian Civil War Geopolitical region by regional and international proxy states**



An ongoing argument within the arms trade is regarding: is the objective of the arms trade security or business? The Syrian Civil War is nearly in its eight year, and while certain aspects may be quieted, militarization and spending on arms is increasing throughout the Middle East. [GunPolicy.org](http://GunPolicy.org) reports that it is estimated that from 2007 to 2017 licit and illicit gun ownership in Syria has more than doubled from and

<sup>4</sup> Global Peace Index, 2018. *Global Peace Index 2018*. Institute for Economics and Peace, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/06/Global-Peace-Index-2018-2.pdf>

estimate of 735,000 to 1,547,000 people.<sup>5</sup> To analyze the arms trade as it impacts the Syrian Civil War, we will look at the states that are leaders in the EU and arms trade (Germany, UK, Spain, France), have a reputation for arms sales (Ukraine, Italy), and are renowned international proxies in the Syrian Civil War (United States and Russia). Through these three lenses into the arms trade and security, further lines of research inquiry will be developed.

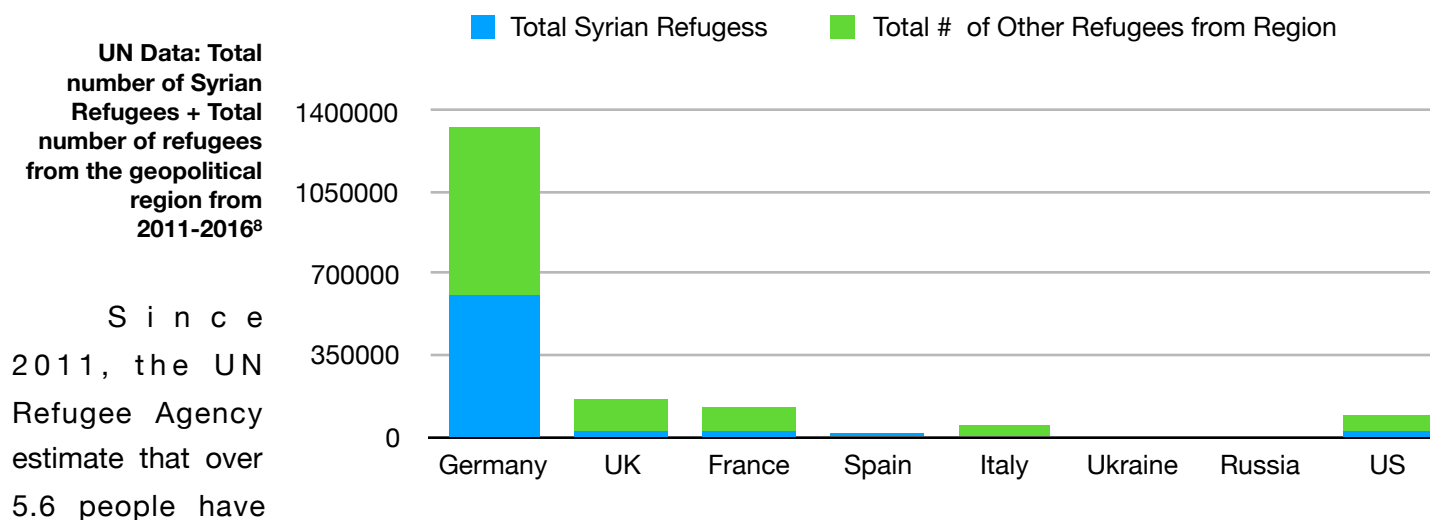


and year, an increase in the total arms sales from 2011-2017 is clearly visible. The clear increase in arms sales, even apparent with reduced transparency of data, is controversial as it violates all eight of the CEMTEQ code of conduct criteria: does not respect EU and UN sanctions; the geopolitical region where they are being delivered does not respect human rights; the internal situation where the arms are destined is extremely insecure; there is no cohesive regional strategy for preserving- or establishing- regional peace, security and stability; external proxy relations within and beyond the region are notoriously strained; terrorism and International Law violations have defined actors within the region; equipment is consistently documented as being diverted from the intended recipient; and, armament has added exacerbating the humanitarian crisis within and around Syria making arms exports a failure in supporting the technical and economic capacity of the state and region. CEMTEQ has become mandatory within the EU Commission and is mentioned directly in the legislation of many countries. However, states are able to find loopholes in the Code by redefining, redirecting, and applying secrecy to transactions as frequent methods of maintaining arms sales without accountability.<sup>6</sup> While the US is openly hostile to arms trade legislation and blocked more cohesive international action, the EU continues to strive toward implementing an “EU arms

<sup>5</sup> GunPolicy.org. *Syria- Gun Facts, Figures and the Law*. GunPolicy.org, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/syria>

<sup>6</sup> Pozo, Alejandro, 2018. *Economy and Conflict*. UOC, [print]. (p. 22-23)

export control system,” where key factors are strengthening compliance, creating reporting obligations, and improving both transparency and public scrutiny.<sup>7</sup>



fled Syria as refugees, with 6.6 million people internally displaced, and 13.1 million people in dire need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>9</sup> From 2011-2016, UN Data shows that the leading states in the arms trade have accepted 704,271 Syrian refugees into their countries legally, or approximately 1/8 of the total 5.6 million Syrian refugees. The use of terrorism, indiscriminate and deliberate attacks against the civilian population by multiple actors, has decreased security throughout the Syrian state. In particular, President Bashar Assad has sanctioned the repeated use of chemical gas attacks indiscriminately killing men, women and children. Additionally, ISIS has contributed to increased numbers of refugees through their many acts of terrorism within the region.<sup>10</sup> Despite these actions against human rights and International Law, the majority of EU and international proxies from 2011-2016 remain remarkably unmoving in the numbers of refugees that they admit. The only exception within this analysis and timeframe is Germany, which has proportionally increased refugee hosting in response to need. Though these actions must be questioned on two levels. First, in reviewing the Norwegian initiative

<sup>7</sup> European Parliament, 2017. “Workshop: The implementation of the EU arms export control system.” European Parliament: Directorate-General for External Policies, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at:

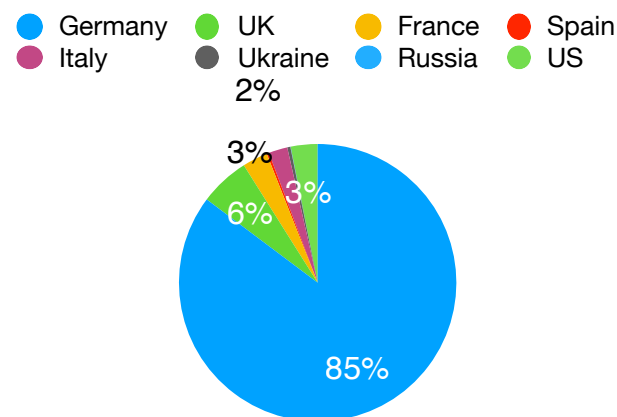
<sup>8</sup> UN, 2018. “Table with Data on Refugees.” *UNData: A world of Information*, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <http://data.un.org/Default.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> UN, 2018. *Syria Emergency*. UNHCR, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

<sup>10</sup> Escola de Cultura de Pau. 2018. *Alert 2018! Report on conflicts, human rights, and peacebuilding*. Escola de Cultura de Pau, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <https://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/alerta/alerta/18/alerta18i.pdf>

on Small Arms Transfers, NISAT, data from 2013-2014, it is reported that Germany repeatedly sold Syria “ML7, chemical and biological toxic agents, tear gases, radioactive materials, related equipment, components and technology.”<sup>11</sup> The ethical repercussions are considerable in relation to Syria’s abuse of human rights and must be considered parallel to Germany’s refugee policies. Secondly, while refugee rates in other states during the 2011-2016 period remain relatively low and stable, they fail to reflect the flow of people that open borders within the EU allows, or the numbers of unreported Syrians within the region. The “European Arms that Foster Armed Conflicts, Conflicts that Cause refugees to Flee” report (2017) by the Centre Delàs d’Estudis per la Pau concludes that “in 26 [out of 36] of the primary recipients of European arms with fluxes of refugees and displaced persons, the impact of arms imports is correlated with a negative evolution or perpetuation of conflict.”<sup>12</sup> Centre Delàs d’Estudis per la Pau argues that a state’s supports of the arms import of a geopolitical region that is afflicted by on-going conflict, they are also contributing to the refugee crisis and the security concerns therein.

**UN Data: Percent division of Syrian refugees between countries:**



The initial question of whether the arms trade is motivated by security or profit is on-going and clearly not easy to resolve. However, through analyzing the relationship between states that provide arms, geopolitical regions that receive them, and the lasting consequences that are faced by refugees and the security challenges in the countries that receive them, we may better understand how the arms trade is militarizing international relations. EU security concerns, such as how to combat terrorism, criminalize money laundering, improve ID cards, provide cross-border access to evidence, and secure borders, all

<sup>11</sup> NISAT, 2017. *NISAT: Norwegian initiative on Small Arms Transfers*, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <http://nisat.prio.org/Trade-Database/>

<sup>12</sup> Rufanges, Jordi Calvo, Ainhoa Ruis Benedicto, Edgard Vega Vargas. 2017. *European Arms that Foster Armed Conflicts, Conflicts that Cause Refugees to Flee*. Centre Delàs. d’Estudis per la Pau, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: [http://www.centredelas.org/images/INFORMES\\_i\\_altres\\_PDF/informe32\\_refugiados\\_ENG\\_web\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.centredelas.org/images/INFORMES_i_altres_PDF/informe32_refugiados_ENG_web_DEF.pdf)

correlate to the destabilization of a geopolitical region by militarization.<sup>13</sup> Greater public awareness and demand for transparency and disclosure within the arms trade is needed. Continuing to identify legitimate as well as “secret,” or clandestine, arms pipelines, such as the manufacturing partners that the US finances in Bulgaria and Serbia that provide munitions to rebel Syrian groups and have also been traced to ISIS,<sup>14</sup> is obviously necessary. Reports, such as “weapons of the Islamic State” by Conflict Armament Research which investigates how ISIS obtains and maintains arms in Syria and Iraq, are important because they identify trends that will define the future of war.<sup>15</sup> As was demonstrated by the Cold War, arms may serve to reinforce the geopolitical power of a state, and in conjunction, their security, when they are directly associated with an existing power structure. However, wars such as the Syrian Civil War, are demonstrating that security and peace must be defined by new terms, changing contexts, and new visions of accountability when traditional authority structures are deconstructed and the identity of combatants is no longer defined by borders.

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<sup>13</sup> European Commission. 2018. *Security Union: A Europe that Protects*. European Commission, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181010\\_agenda-on-security-factsheet-progress-report\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181010_agenda-on-security-factsheet-progress-report_en.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Aljazeera. 2018. “America's Guns: Secret Pipeline to Syria.” Aljazeera: People and Power, [online] 27 Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2018/03/america-guns-secret-pipeline-syria-180314121047479.html>

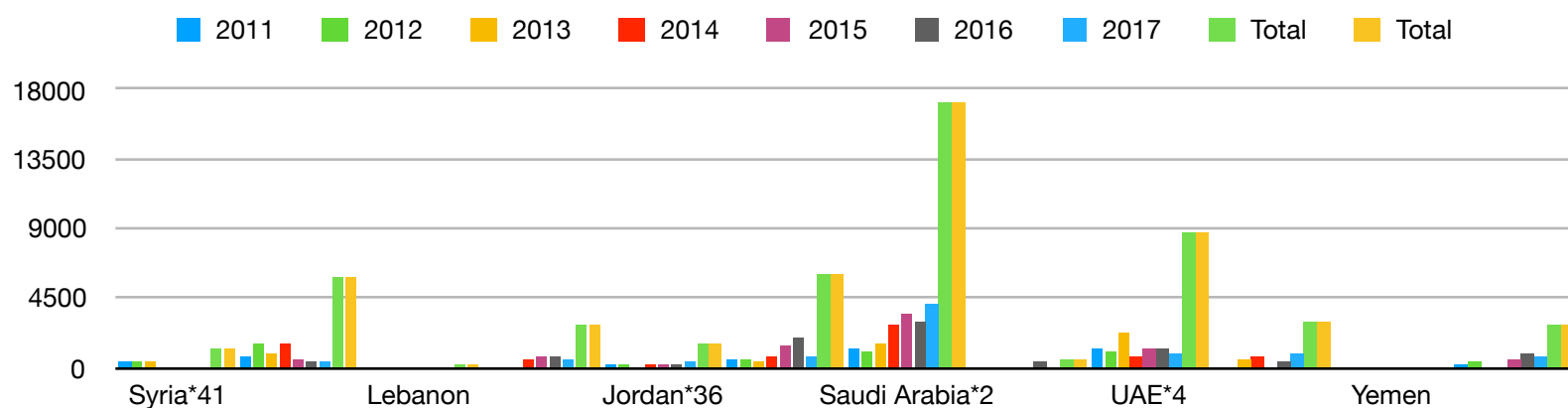
<sup>15</sup> Conflict Armament Research. 2017. *Weapons of the Islamic State: A three-year investigation in Iraq and Syria*. Conflict Armament Research, [online] 27 Dec 2017. Available at: [www.conflictarm.com/download-file/?report\\_id=2568&file\\_id=2574](http://www.conflictarm.com/download-file/?report_id=2568&file_id=2574)

## INDEX OF DATA:

**PART 1: SIPRI data from the arms trade database corresponding to the geopolitical region impacted by the Syrian Civil War and key EU and international proxy stakeholders from 2011-2017. Additional correlating data regarding refugees from 2011-2016 is also provided.**

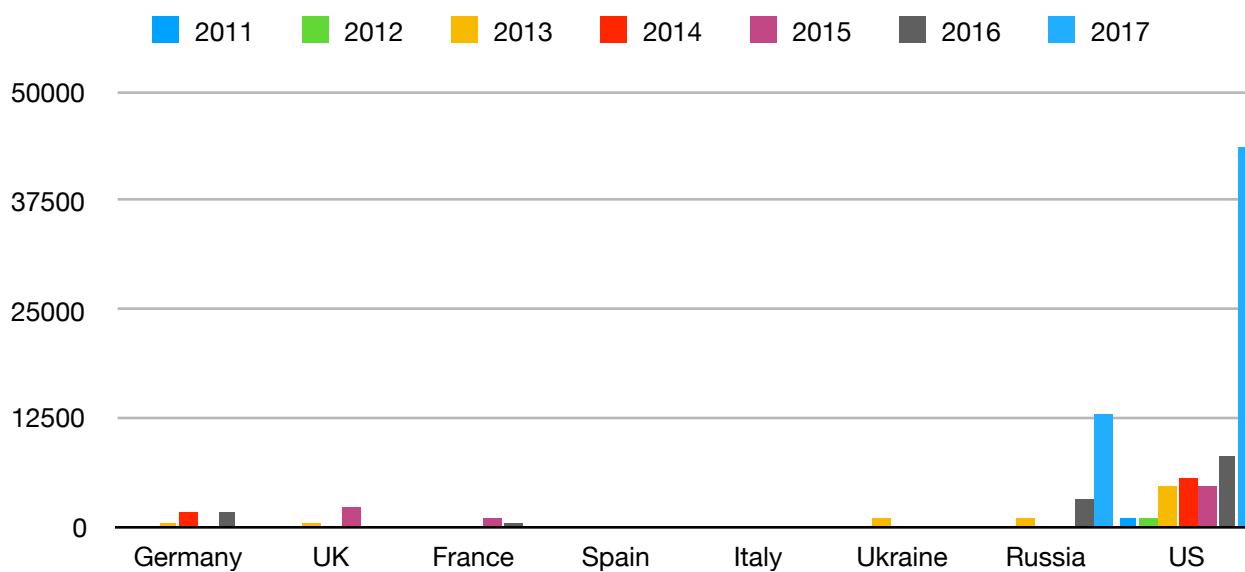
SIRPI Report of Received Arms from 2011 - 2017 (*#= top 50 arms recipient in world from 2011-2017 with ranking noted)												
	Syria* 41	Turkey* 9	Lebanon	Israel* 23	Jordan* 36	Iraq* 1	Saudi Arabia* 2	Iran	UAE* 4	Oman* 22	Yemen	Qatar* 26
<b>2011</b>	358	777	1	85	215	574	1222	100	1210	21	45	198
<b>2012</b>	361	1501	31	120	176	476	1033	46	1088	120	38	319
<b>2013</b>	351	797	24	153	75	353	1615	31	2241	490	23	73
<b>2014</b>	21	1525	6	510	196	633	2741	13	746	736	6	55
<b>2015</b>	22	460	46	675	236	1403	3352	13	1249	122	30	518
<b>2016</b>	5	348	28	610	212	1827	2986	398	1286	415	4	896
<b>2017</b>	22	410	84	528	386	712	4111	4	848	783		670
<b>Total</b>	<b>1139</b>	<b>5817</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>2679</b>	<b>1495</b>	<b>5978</b>	<b>17060</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>8668</b>	<b>2886</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>2729</b>

### Distribution of received arms by country from 2011-2017:



**SIPRI: Total Sale of arms to Syrian Region (as defined in above chart):**

<b>SIPRI: TOTAL Sale of Arms from 2011-2017</b>									
	Germany	UK	France	Spain	Italy	Ukraine	Russia	US	Total
<b>2011</b>	100		106				98	1134	<b>1438</b>
<b>2012</b>	34	3		3	28	19	130	1162	<b>1379</b>
<b>2013</b>	515	350	100		7	1122	1068	4696	<b>7858</b>
<b>2014</b>	1565		111		4		315	5708	<b>7703</b>
<b>2015</b>	105	2459	974	3	27		28	4736	<b>8332</b>
<b>2016</b>	1596		368	234	27		3322	8161	<b>13708</b>
<b>2017</b>	128	170	63	1	56		13135	43561	<b>57114</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4043</b>	<b>2982</b>	<b>1722</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>18096</b>	<b>69158</b>	<b>97532</b>

**Graph of sales by country from 2011-2017:**

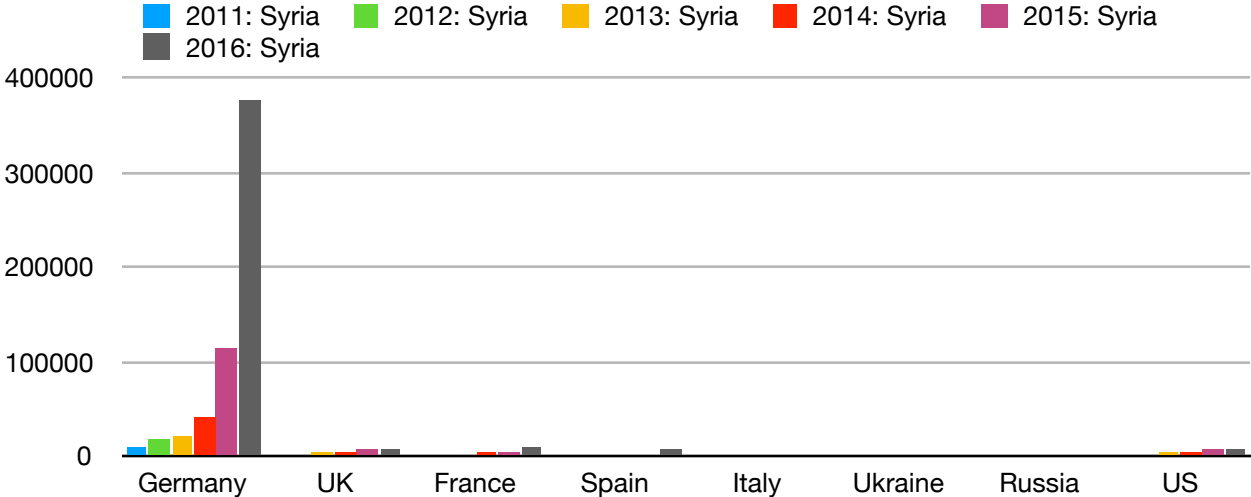




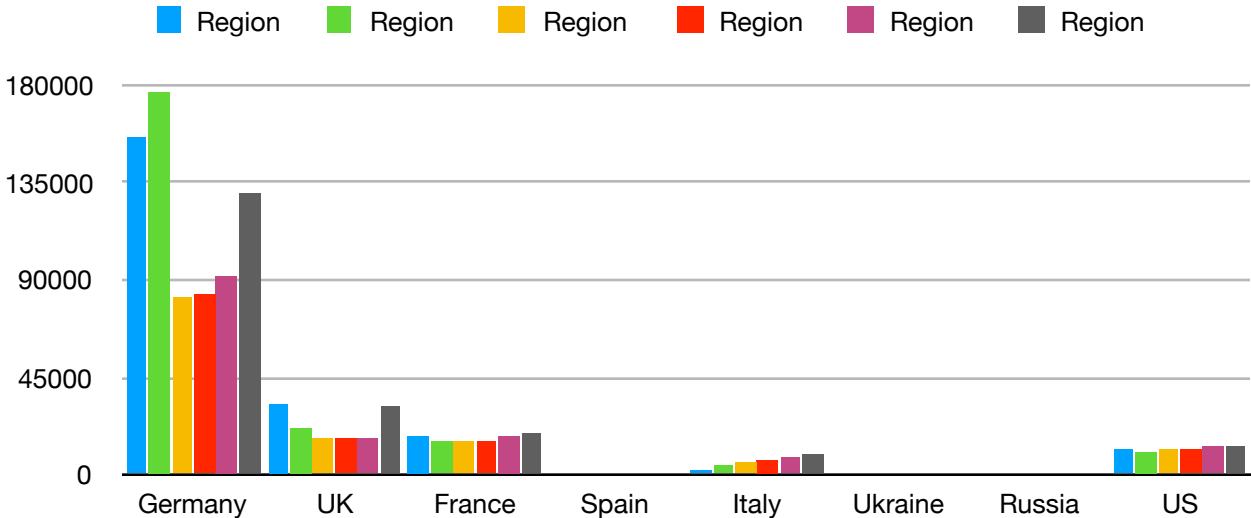
## REFUGEE Data Presentation (UN Data):

<b>Refugee Rates from UN Data: Arriving to states of arms sale from Syria and geopolitical region</b>									
	Germany	UK	France	Spain	Italy	Ukraine	Russia	US	Total
<b>2011: Syria</b>	10155	693	351	32	262	43	4	373	<b>11913</b>
<b>Region</b>	156106	32410	18155	329	1809	140	41	12163	<b>221153</b>
<b>2012: Syria</b>	18165	1717	640	32	445	63	53	1425	<b>22540</b>
<b>Region</b>	176761	21765	15810	333	4773	148	30	11186	<b>230806</b>
<b>2013: Syria</b>	21253	3169	1474	180	840	167	1163	3802	<b>28628</b>
<b>Region</b>	82546	17337	15991	339	5722	157	29	11478	<b>133599</b>
<b>2014: Syria</b>	40994	4573	2882	1336	1144	341	1927	4750	<b>57947</b>
<b>Region</b>	82984	16315	16209	296	6980	161	32	12237	<b>135214</b>
<b>2015: Syria</b>	115604	6496	5179	1992	1460	399	1304	5651	<b>138085</b>
<b>Region</b>	92284	17240	18064	278	7919	167	77	13137	<b>149166</b>
<b>2016: Syria</b>	375122	8269	8991	8205	2613	446	1319	6444	<b>411409</b>
<b>Region</b>	129472	31237	19452	351	9101	165	93	13670	<b>203541</b>
<b>Total Syrian Refugess</b>	<b>609613</b>	<b>24917</b>	<b>19517</b>	<b>11777</b>	<b>6773</b>	<b>1459</b>	<b>5770</b>	<b>22445</b>	<b>702271</b>
<b>Total # of Refugees from geopoli. region</b>	<b>720153</b>	<b>136304</b>	<b>103681</b>	<b>1926</b>	<b>36304</b>	<b>1556</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>72871</b>	<b>1073097</b>
<b>Total Region and Syrian Refugees</b>	<b>1329766</b>	<b>161224</b>	<b>123198</b>	<b>13793</b>	<b>43077</b>	<b>3015</b>	<b>6072</b>	<b>95316</b>	<b>1775368</b>

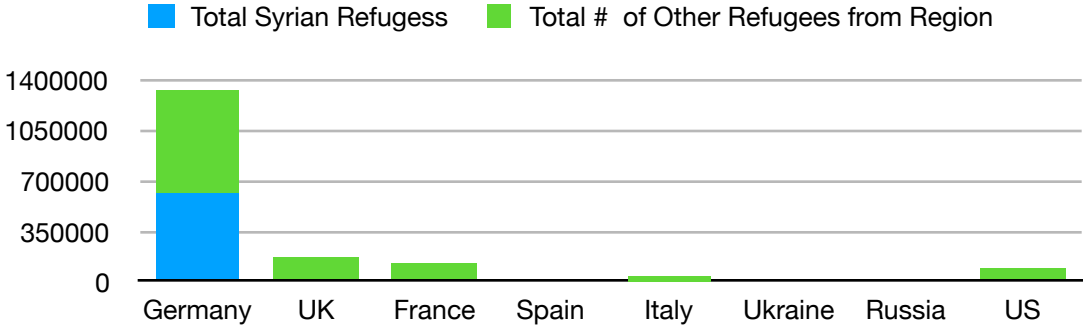
**Syrian refugee rates year and country:**



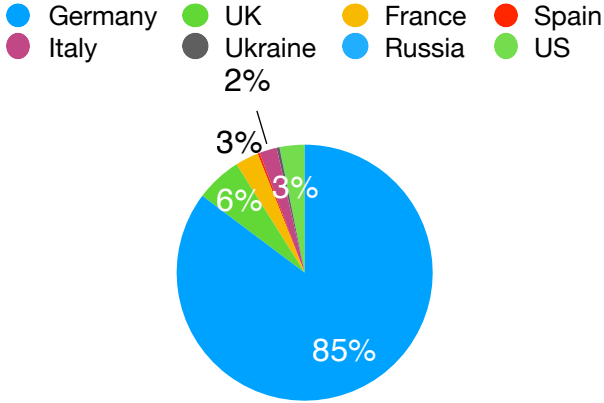
**Refugee rates from the geopolitical region surrounding Syria, not including Syrian #s:**



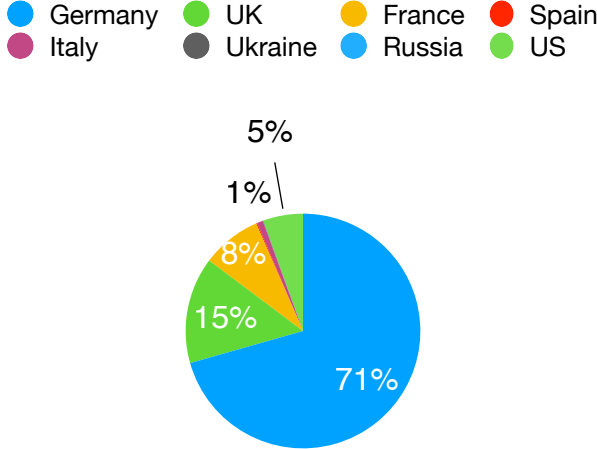
**Comparison of total Syrian Refugees to total # of other refugees from geopolitical region:**



**Percent division of Syrian refugees between countries:**



**Percent division of geopolitical refugees between countries:**



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