

Migrants - Usage of Social Media

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Social Media

in the lives of the refugees and migrants:



- Critically important at every stage of their migration journey
- Essential for refugees:
 - Before
 - During
 - After their journeys to safe countries





The majority of Syrian asylum migrants have access to social media information before and during migration, often through the use of smartphones.

Websites and Applications Consulted Before and During Migration

VoIP: Voice over IP; NGO: non-governmental organizations Source: R.Dekker, G. Engbersen, J.Klaver and H.Vonk, *Smart Refugees: How Syrian Asylum Migrants Use Social Media Information in Migration Decision-Making* (Social Media + Society) January-March 2018: 1–11



	Before migration, % (n=51)	During migration, % (n=47)
Social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn)	80	38
Instant messaging (WhatsApp, Ping)	63	66
(Skype, Viber)	47	38
(Annotated) maps (Google Maps)	20	64
Video sharing (YouTube, Vine)	14	4
Government websites	2	0
Other (primarily websites found via Google)	41	13

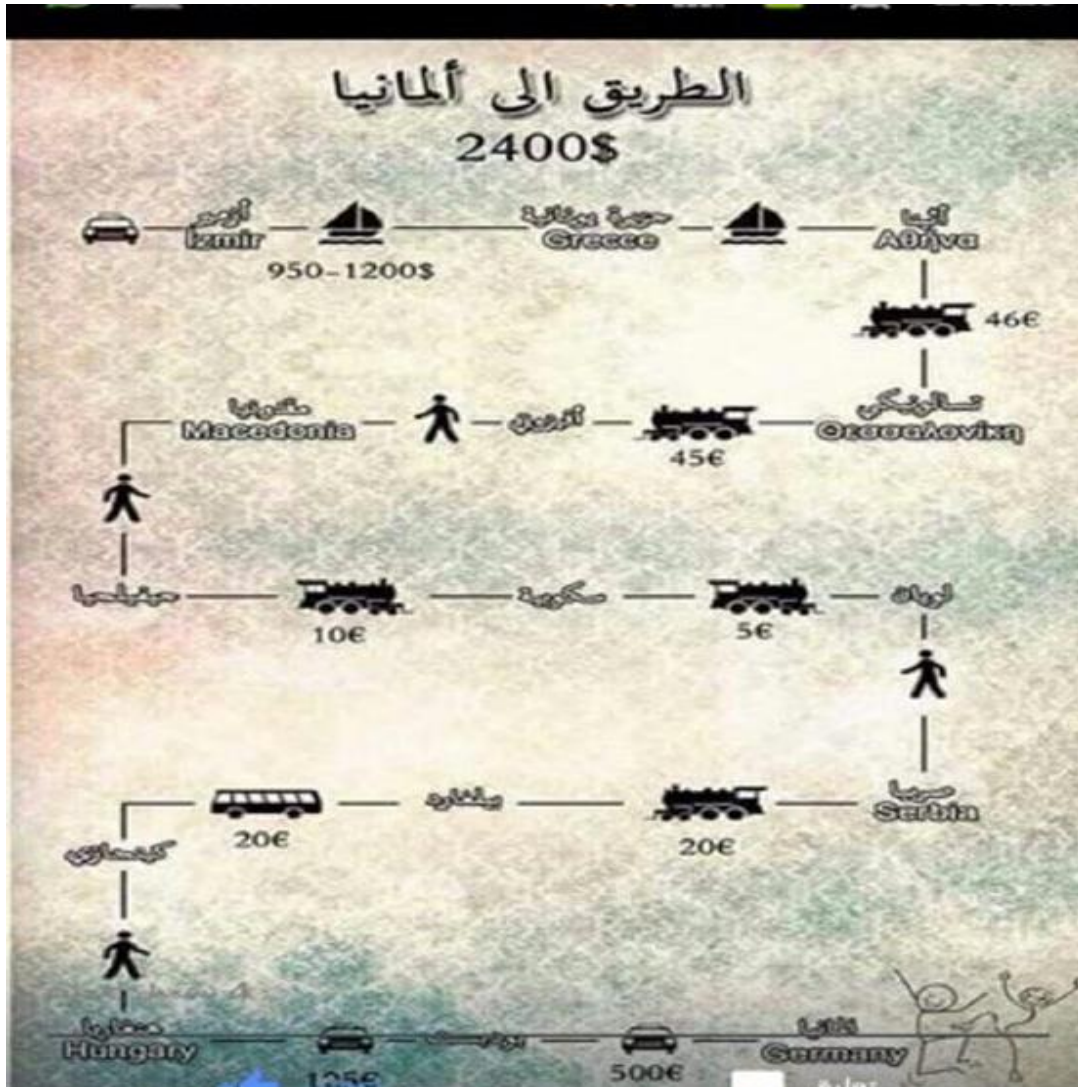
SOCIAL MEDIA – Source of Important Information



- – to help confirm and compare information between the official government sources and more word-of-mouth sources and rumours on social media
- (what site could be trusted?)

VoIP: Voice over IP; NGO: non-governmental organization Source: R.Dekker, G. Engbersen, J.Klaver and H.Vonk, *Smart Refugees: How Syrian Asylum Migrants Use Social Media Information in Migration Decision-Making* (Social Media + Society, SEP, January-March 2018: 1–11)

SOCIAL MEDIA – Source of Important Information



■ “The Road to Germany” (الطريق الى ألمانيا [al-Tariq ila Almanya])

- Source: Gillespie, Marie; Osseiran, Souad and Cheesman, Margie (2018). *Syrian Refugees and the Digital Passage to Europe: Smartphone Infrastructures and Affordances*

“The Road to Germany” (الطريق الى المانيا [al-Tariq ila Almanya])



Digital map of the Balkans route

- Syrian refugees who were taking the Balkans route in late 2015.
- Demonstrated digital skills - various smartphone applications (WhatsApp, Messenger, Viber)



Other Benefits of Social Media



- Helps to keep in touch with family and friends
- Contributes to making the processes of settlement and integration easier for refugees
- Connection to the underground networks

Helps to find valuable and useful
legal information

- to reach NGOs, such as Mobile
Info Team providing legal
support.

OTHER BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA



Mobile Info Team

Using the Power of Social Media

<https://www.mobileinfoteam.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/mobileinfoteam/>



- Watch = VIDEO:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=907caDfm3Qs>
- – onsite and online support to marginalised communities
- – vital information, clarification and assistance for their asylum procedure (refugees)
- - their questions answered through their Facebook page – (access to the accurate and up-to-date information easily and online)

- answers to questions received – through WhatsApp recorded messages.

Calls can be received in Arabic and English.

WhatsApp messages answered in Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and English.



Harmful Usage of Social Media Platforms

According to the UNHCR:

- dark digital underworld
- – Social media used by smugglers → feed unrealistic expectations in refugees
 - = overly-glamorous migration experience
 - = highly idealized image of Europe as a place where they can easily get jobs, housing, access to healthcare

<https://www.unhcr.org/blogs/smartphones-revolutionized-refugee-migration/>

Usage of Social Media – Youth Refugees: MEDIA LITERACY PROJECT



- ***Media literacy for unaccompanied refugee youth***
- Digital technologies used by:
 - – unaccompanied young refugees (14-19)
 - – their carers, mentors and educators
- media literacy education is essential for the youth and their mentors

- young refugees can become easily lost when trying to access the digital world
- needing multiple skills and tools
- the majority of unaccompanied young people (did not think too critically about their online experiences)

<https://theconversation.com/for-young-refugees-a-mobile-phone-can-be-as-important-as-food-and-water-when-arriving-in-a-new-country-122077>

<https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/projects/media-literacy-unaccompanied-refugee-youth>



Thank you for your attention 😊