

# Greece

**3,800 people arrived by sea and land** this month, the majority of whom from Syria and Iraq. On the islands, the heavy rain worsened further the living conditions for asylum-seekers.

Protection risks increased in the overcrowded RICs as hygiene and security deteriorated, putting children and the vulnerable in particular danger. The Government decided to increase

transfers of those eligible to accommodation in Government-run sites and UNHCR apartments in the mainland and Crete with UNHCR's support.

**48,662** refugees and migrants in Greece<sup>1</sup>

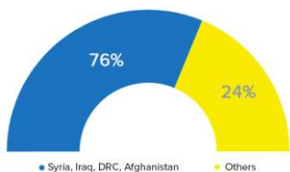
**34,076** in the mainland

**14,586** on the islands

**36,135** eligible people received cash assistance from UNHCR this month

**38,534** people have so far benefited from UNHCR accommodation<sup>2</sup>

**17,764** people transferred from the islands to the mainland (UNHCR supported)<sup>3</sup>



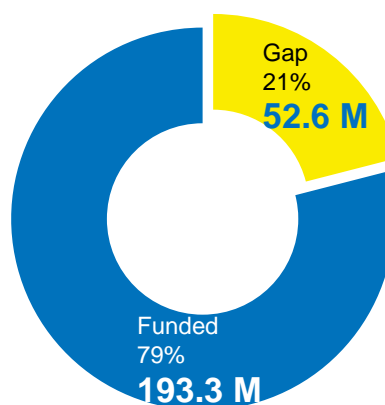
**76%** of arrivals in 2017 are from Syria, Iraq, DRC and Afghanistan

<sup>1</sup>UNHCR estimates as of 30 November 2017  
<sup>2</sup>Since the start of the programme in November 2015  
<sup>3</sup>Between June 2016 and November 2017

## FUNDING (AS OF 28 NOVEMBER)

**USD 245.9 M**

requested for the Greece operation



## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

403 National Staff

67 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Country Office in Athens

3 Mainland Offices in Attika, Thessaloniki, Ioannina

6 Island Offices in Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros, Kos, and Rhodes



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A young refugee waits in line at the Reception and Identification Centre in Vial on the Greek island of Chios.

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR supports the Government of Greece who coordinates the refugee response. The Office works with other UN agencies, international and national NGOs, state institutions, community-based organizations, refugee and host communities through sectoral Working Groups at the national and field levels.

## Main Activities

### ESTIA Accommodation and Cash Assistance

- Cash assistance restores dignity and empowers asylum-seekers and refugees who can now choose how to cover their basic needs. It also contributes directly to the economy of the host community through the purchase of services and goods. This month, 36,135 people received cash assistance in Greece from UNHCR, and the UNHCR-funded Greece Cash Alliance partners.
- By the end of November, UNHCR had created 18,927 places to house vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in rented accommodation. Urban accommodation helps provide people with a sense of normalcy and facilitates their access to services, including education. It also facilitates the eventual integration of those who will remain in Greece, while the host population benefits from the renting of their apartments. So far, 38,534 people have benefited from UNHCR's accommodation in Greece since November 2015.
- UNHCR works with the Government, local authorities in several Municipalities and NGOs to provide urban accommodation and cash assistance to asylum-seekers in Greece, funded by the Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation (ESTIA) of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

### Protection

- To alleviate the overcrowded conditions in the Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) of the Aegean islands, UNHCR continued to work with the Ministry of Migration Policy to transfer eligible asylum-seekers from the islands to urban accommodation in the mainland and Crete or to Government-run sites in the mainland from where to continue their asylum applications. This month the Ministry of Migration Policy with UNHCR's support intensified transfers in response to the increased arrivals, supporting 2,128 asylum-seekers from Lesbos (1,235), Chios (323), Samos (426), Kos (84), Leros (42), and other islands (18). A total of 17,764 people have been assisted with transfers from the islands to the mainland since June 2016, nearly one third of them between mid-August 2017 and 30 November 2017 in response to the overcrowding on the islands.
- UNHCR continued to provide legal aid through partners to asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. By October 2017, the Greek Council for Refugees, Ecumenical Refugee Program and METAdrasi had provided legal assistance in the form of counselling and representation to nearly 5,200 asylum-seekers and

beneficiaries of international protection in detention, open reception facilities as well as to people living in urban areas on asylum procedures, family reunification, child protection, protection of SGBV survivors, other relevant administrative procedures and access to rights.

- Moreover, METAdrasi and GCR also provided legal assistance at the appeal stage of the asylum procedures in the framework of UNHCR's Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Minister of Migration Policy. Between the beginning of the programme on 15 July 2016 and 30 April 2017, over 4,800 appellants benefited from free legal assistance at second instance. Of those, 2,800 were assisted in 2017.
- UNHCR supports the Asylum Service by helping upon request caseworkers with on-the-job training and advice on drafting decisions and conducting interviews. In November, UNHCR helped in over 1,000 instances.

### **Child Protection**

- Only one out of three unaccompanied children in Greece can be accommodated in shelters, as the number of 3,250 children by far exceeds the 1,150 available places. As a result, children continue to risk spending extended periods in the reception and identification centres (RICs) and in protective custody. (EKKA Statistics).
- In response, UNHCR and partners are working with the authorities to develop diverse alternative care arrangements. One of these is Supported Independent Living (SIL) where children will be assisted by dedicated guardians and support teams.
- In addition, UNHCR facilitates the transfer of children who turn eighteen to rented housing in its Accommodation Scheme. This helps provide very much needed space in shelters and also ensures support to the young adults during this transitional period which is often challenging and represents particular risks and concerns.
- UNHCR also provides advice and technical support to the Government and expert staff to EKKA, the agency responsible for the referral of unaccompanied children to shelters, and coordinates with humanitarian actors and stakeholders in monitoring and developing Standard Operating Procedures to ensure minimum standards for child protection.
- This month, UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Ministry of Migration Policy, the General Secretariat for the Welfare of Asylum-seekers, the Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity, and the General Secretariat for Welfare through the National Centre of Social Solidarity (EKKA) on the implementation of Section 67 of the UK Immigration Act (2016), otherwise known as the "Dubs Scheme". The MoC outlines the Best Interest Determination procedures as well as the identification and transfer of eligible unaccompanied children from Greece to the UK within the framework of the Scheme.

### **Sexual and Gender Based Violence**

- The overcrowded conditions in the reception centres of the islands and poor conditions in some sites in the mainland translate into poor shelter allocation. This leads to a lack of privacy and compromises safe access to WASH facilities, thus heightening the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). It thus adds to the vulnerability of refugees who are already suffering from the sudden breakdown of family and community structures as a result of their forced displacement.

- UNHCR works on SGBV prevention and response by pro-actively identifying people at risk, referring them to appropriate services, and by providing legal information and counselling. UNHCR also conducts awareness raising sessions and campaigns.
- UNHCR works through national NGOs, DIOTIMA-Centre for Research on Women Issues, the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) and Arsis to prevent and respond to SGBV in sites in the mainland and urban locations in Athens. UNHCR also works through the International Rescue Committee for the provision of services in Kara Tepe, Lesbos Island.
- UNHCR and partners have developed referral pathways for refugee-hosting sites and urban accommodation facilities so that survivors of SGBV receive the support they need.

### Education

- The Ministry of Education estimates that some 2,500 refugee and asylum-seeking children attend regular school classes in Greece, the majority of whom reside in urban accommodation. As enrolment in schools continues, the Ministry estimates that an additional 2,000 children will also soon attend Greek schools. In the coming months, an additional 2,400 children residing in camps are expected to begin afternoon reception classes, which aim to facilitate their transition into the public school system.
- UNHCR supports non-formal education on the islands, where formal education is not yet available for most children.

### Health

- UNHCR works to ameliorate refugees' and asylum-seekers' access to healthcare, working closely with the Ministry of Health and other partners.
- A particular problem in Greece is the lack of public mental health institutions. UNHCR is trying to identify alternative referral pathways to direct those who are affected by mental health issues to public institutions.
- UNHCR with UNFPA and KEELPNO are training the newly recruited medical staff of KEELPNO participating in the PHILOS programme who will be providing primary healthcare and conducting vulnerability assessments in the Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, and Kos. The training focused on medical vulnerabilities, the relevant legal framework, sexual and reproductive health, and the clinical management of rape and SGBV amongst others.
- UNHCR funds primary and psychosocial support services in Lesbos and Chios. UNHCR also funds health services in Attika, where doctors such as paediatricians, psychologists and others provide medical services at the policlinic of the municipality of Athens.

### Durable Solutions

- The enhanced capacity of the Asylum Service in Greece have translated into an accelerated rate for the granting of status to those in need of international protection. As such, some 8,100 people were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection between January and the end of October 2017, three times the number of 2,700 people who received protection in the entire year of 2016.
- The increased number of recognized refugees translates into a pressing need to support their transition from the assistance they received as asylum-seekers to the national

programmes they are eligible for in Greece on the same terms and conditions as Greek nationals. To facilitate this transition, UNHCR with the Government and relevant actors have agreed on a transitional period of some months during which recognized refugees can access cash assistance and accommodation, on a case-by-case basis.

### Relocation and Returns

- In November, 119 people relocated from Greece to other EU Member States according to the Asylum Service, bringing the total to 21,322 people since the start of the programme. (Asylum Service data as of 26 November)
- Also in November, 75 people were returned from Greece to Turkey in the framework of the E.U. - Turkey Statement. Since 20 March 2016, 1,468 people have been returned to Turkey.

### Logistics

- Many of the sites in the mainland are remote from services and public transportation. UNHCR ensures that this does not hinder people's access to asylum or services. In November, UNHCR provided transportation in Attika and Northern Greece to nearly 6,600 people to the Asylum Service, Embassies, accommodation, sites, for medical appointments and the airport for family reunification.

### Partners

In November UNHCR worked through 35 partners in 9 sectors. UNHCR worked on Protection with Arsis, GCR, KSPM-ERP, METAdrasi, Praksis, Diotima, ICMC, Citizens UK, UNOPS and DRC; on Child Protection with Arsis, Faros, Iliaktida, METAdrasi, NCDP, Nostos and Praksis; On Cash with Care, CRS, IFRC, IRC, Mercy Corps and Samaritan's Purse; On Accommodation with Arsis, Faros, Iliaktida, Nostos, Praksis, Solidarity Now, CRS and Local Authorities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Livadia, Crete, Trikala, Nea Filadelfia – Nea Chalkidona, Karditsa, Larisa.; On NFI, shelter & WASH with Samaritan's Purse; On Site Management Support with DRC, Intersos, Samaritan's Purse, UNOPS and Reception and Identification Service; On Health with MDM; On Peaceful coexistence & Integration with Arsis, KEAN, Faros, Solidarity Now, Samaritan's Purse, Intersos and UNOPS; On Public awareness raising with TENet-Gr, UNOPS.



## External / Donors Relations

### Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2017

United States of America (266 M) | Sweden (76 M) | Private Donors Spain (54 M) | Netherlands (52 M) | United Kingdom (45 M) | Norway (41 M) | Private Donors Republic of Korea (26 M) | Japan (25 M) | Denmark (23 M) | Australia (19 M) | Private Donors Italy (17 M) | Private Donors USA (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Private Donors Japan (14 M) | Private Donors Sweden (12 M) | Germany (12 M) | Italy (10 M)

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### Thanks to the donors for the Greece Operation

European Union (190.5 M) | Spain (1.9 M) | Republic of Korea (0.8 M) | Fondation BNP Paribas (0.4 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (0.3 M) | The Big Heart Foundation (0.1 M)

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