

GREECE: ACCOMMODATION FOR RELOCATION PROJECT FACTSHEET



As part of the EU-funded project:

“Support to Greece for the development of the hotspot/relocation scheme as well as for developing asylum reception capacity”

CURRENT ACHIEVEMENTS

7,252 accommodation places established for relocation candidates and asylum-seekers in Greece.

8,923 beneficiaries
(Cumulative number of current and past places occupied, including persons relocated to Member States and irregular departures and/or abandons).

6,186 places pledged by EU Member States for relocation from Greece.

3,802 persons accepted by the EU Member States for relocation from Greece.

1,994 persons left Greece to other EU countries under the relocation scheme.

1,000 vulnerable asylum-seekers not eligible for relocation are currently benefitting from the accommodation scheme.

133 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) currently in accommodation.

What is Relocation?

In September 2015, based on the European Commission proposals, the Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted the decision to relocate a total of 160,000 asylum-seekers from Greece and Italy and to assist them in dealing with the pressure of the refugee crisis and as mechanism of responsibility sharing among Member States. Under this scheme, asylum-seekers with nationalities for which the average recognition rate of international protection at the EU level is 75% or above, according to the most recent quarterly Union-wide Eurostat data, would be eligible for relocation to other EU Member States where their asylum applications will be processed. If their applications are successful, the applicants will be granted refugee status with the right to reside in the respective EU Member State, where they have been relocated. The relocations should take place over two years, with the EU budget providing financial support to the participating Member States.

In Greece, the Relocation Scheme is implemented by the Greek Asylum Service under the overall supervision of the Alternate Minister of Migration Policy, and aims to relocate a total of 66,400 asylum-seekers from Greece to other EU Member States during the period September 2015-September 2017.¹ As of 1 July 2016, 21 EU Member States and Switzerland have pledged a total of 6,186 places for relocation. The cumulative number of people departed to Member States is 1,967.

UNHCR's Accommodation for Relocation project

The project responds to the Greek Government's request to enhance the reception capacities for asylum-seekers in Greece, by establishing 20,000 accommodation places by the end of 2016, to complement the Government's target of 30,000- yielding to 50,000 places altogether. UNHCR started the Accommodation for Relocation project in November 2015, by using its own funds. In January 2016, UNHCR received funding from the European Union to continue the project throughout 2016. All asylum-seekers included in the Accommodation for Relocation project receive food, hygiene items, basic social support, interpretation and transportation services. Medical, legal and psychosocial support are also provided as required.

Towards out-of-camp assistance and sustainable livelihoods

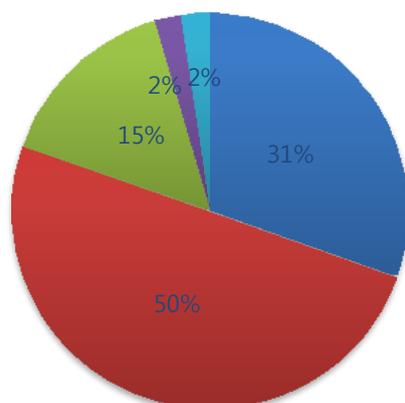
In line with its global [Policy on Alternatives to Camps](#), through the Accommodation for Relocation Project in Greece, UNHCR is not only supporting the relocation scheme as one of the possible solutions for eligible asylum-seekers, but also pursuing alternatives to camps so that refugees have the possibility to live with greater dignity, independence and normality as members of the community. This modality has a positive impact in the integration of refugees as a durable solution for those asylum seekers that may remain as recognized refugees in Greece, increasing interaction with the host community and better opportunities of integration through interaction. Finally, this contributes to a greater understanding within the community of asylum-seekers and refugees, helping to combat unfounded negative perceptions and allowing a more favorable protection environment.

Who we accommodate

The project provides assistance to **asylum-seekers registered with the Greek Asylum Service, who are eligible for relocation to another EU Member State**. The project also assists **vulnerable asylum-seekers in Greece**, including survivors of torture or sexual and gender-based violence, persons with disabilities or serious illnesses, pregnant women, etc.

¹ *European Solidarity "European Solidarity: A Refugee Relocation System" 2015.*

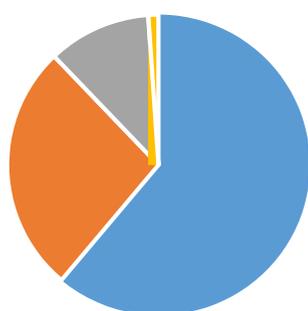
Types of Accommodation (as of 1 July, 2016)



- Hotels/buildings
- Apartments
- Relocation sites (Lagadikia)
- Host families
- Places for unaccompanied and separated children

Where are they located? (as of 1 July, 2016)

Location



- Athens
- Attika
- Thessaloniki
- Islands

Highlights of June

- The accommodations for relocation reached 7,000 spaces, representing a 36% of the 20,000 target, which UNHCR and its partners are planning to reach by the end of 2016.
- United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon visited UNHCR's partner Solidarity Now. UNHCR Honorary Lifetime Goodwill Ambassador Barbara Hendricks and High Profile Supporter Theo James visited various reception sites in Greece, calling on all the European countries to respond by establishing a humanitarian approach that will focus on respect of human rights.
- A Communication and Visibility plan for the Accommodation for Relocation project was developed and presented to the partners, consolidating the efforts to convey our work in an accurate, integrated and positive way.
- A large-scale exercise to pre-register asylum-seekers on mainland Greece was launched on 8 June 2016 by the Greek Asylum Service with UNHCR's support. By the end of June over 15,500 people residing in open temporary accommodation structures received asylum-seeker cards valid for one year, allowing them to reside legally in Greece and to access services, pending the full lodging of their asylum application. The exercise will help to identify those eligible for relocation to another EU country. It will also identify persons with specific needs so that they may be referred to the appropriate organizations and receive assistance and support.

Main Challenges and UNHCR Strategy

- **Departures to relocation countries remain slow**, which increases the length of time the asylum-seekers are spending in the accommodation places, puts pressure on the accommodation capacities and increases the costs per person. As of 30 June 2016, a total of 1,967 persons were relocated to other EU Member States and Switzerland, representing 3% of the 66,400 target of Greece.
- **UNHCR continues to advocate with the Government for allocation of relocation sites**, which could accommodate larger number of relocation candidates than it is possible through the existing scheme of private apartments, host families, hotels and other buildings.
- **A considerable number of asylum-seekers have been found to have specific needs, in particular in need of specialized medical assistance** for serious illnesses, traumas or disabilities. The capacity of the Greek national health care system is increasingly challenged by the high numbers of referrals. UNHCR and its partners are often called upon to address such health care needs of the relocation candidates and asylum-seekers in Greece. UNHCR is seeking to identify operational partners among the humanitarian NGOs, who can provide medical services and can support the Greek health care system to enhance its capacities.

Coordination and Monitoring

- Monthly coordination meetings are held with the partners involved in project implementation.
- Quarterly project control/ verifications are conducted to ensure cost-effectiveness of the programme.
- On-going coordination is established with the Greek Asylum Service and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) for referral to accommodation places.
- A public data portal and a database accessible by partners gives a snapshot of the current achievements.

Photo Gallery

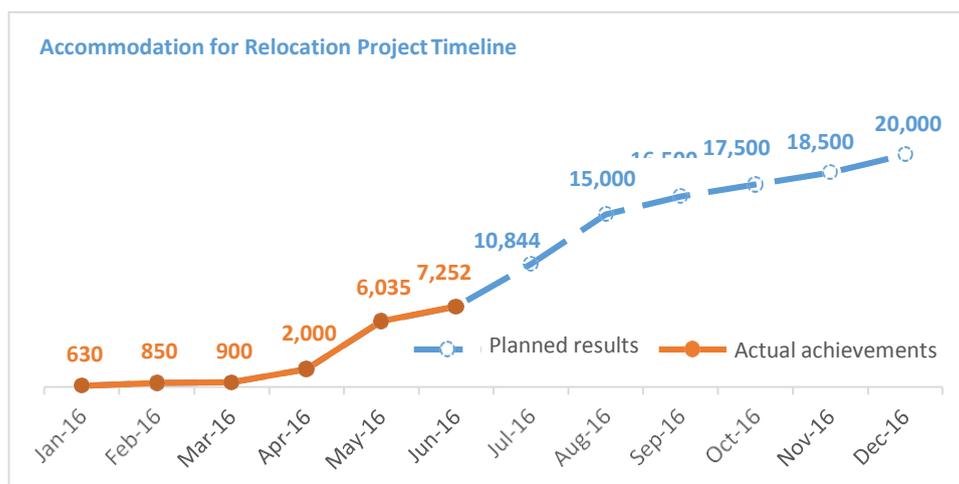


(Top) UN’s Secretary General Ban, Ki-moon is greeted by Mr. Stelios Zavvos the president of a UNHCR partner, Solidarity Now at the Solidarity Centre for the most vulnerable populations in Lesvos office. He stated that ‘the crisis today is a crisis of solidarity’ and ‘Instead of building walls, we need to build bridges between people’. © Solidarity Now/ Nikos Kominis.

(Bottom) UNHCR High Profile Supporter and actor Theo James spoke with Rafi, a 17 year old boy from Syria who had lost part of his elbow and still had shrapnel in his leg as a consequence of a bomb attack. Rafi explained to Theo that he wanted to live in France as he spoke some of the language and was hoping to learn to speak it better. His body was still in a lot of pain and his father Mahmoud worried that he needed pain killers and another operation. © UNHCR/Paul Wu.

Partners and the planned accommodation places

Partner	Available and/or in use as of 01/07/2016	Available and/or in use as of 01/08/2016
Arsis	223	360
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	0	200
Iliaktida	202	202
Municipality of Athens through Athens Development and Destination Management Agency (ADDMA)	113	600
Municipality of Thessaloniki	0	330
Nostos	352	372
Praxis	3,770	5,200
Solidarity Now	194	580
UNHCR through hotels	1,398	2,000
UNHCR through relocation sites	1,000	1,000
Total	7,252	10,844



Highlights of the previous months

Accommodation for Relocation Project Factsheet is a monthly publication for external audiences to highlight the up-to-date achievements and current issues. The Greek version is also produced and shared on the Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response (URL: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>).

Past Issues of the Accommodation for Relocation project Factsheet

- **June issue featured:**
 - Highlights of the EU funded project ‘Support to Greece for the development of the hotspot/relocation scheme as well as for developing asylum reception capacity’, which includes the component of Accommodation for Relocation;
 - The on-going need for support from the local authorities and the hospitality of the Greek communities;
 - The need for a rapid increase in the number of accommodation places, which could be achieved through identification of sites by the Government and their allocation to UNHCR as relocation sites;
 - *Saeed’s long pursuit of a safe home* – A beneficiary’s story

Contact: Relocation Project Unit, Won-Na Cha- Associate External Relations Officer, chaw@unhcr.org.

A beneficiary's story:

“Learning from differences will make us all better people”

Fadwa Abdallatif is a young mother (25) from Syria, with a daughter (3) and a baby boy. She is currently hosted by Mrs. Gyra and Mr. Dmitri's family in the Voula area. After a series of near-death incidents, Fadwa decided to flee across the border to find safer shelter for her children. She first walked to Turkey for three days, with her children in her arms. The daughter suffered a broken leg along the journey, eventually undergoing surgery in Turkey. From there, it took four attempts to cross the sea to the Greek islands – which every time the journey failed, she had to pay an extra 100 USD plus another 100 USD each for life jackets. On March 10, they arrived in Lesvos then travelled to Piraeus. Mrs. Gyra offered to accommodate them through the UNHCR partner Solidarity Now.

Barbara Hendricks, the UNHCR Honorary Lifetime Goodwill Ambassador visited the family on 9 June.



Fadwa holds her children in her host family's house living room. She is waiting for the Relocation application to be assessed. © UNHCR/Won-Na Cha.

What does 'Home' mean to you?

(Fadwa, 25) “Comfort, safety, to be able to sleep and wake up whenever I want to. There is no war, I have nothing to fear. My children are safe here. The generosity of the family makes me feel like we are a part of them.”

How has the experience been so far?

(Helen, 15, daughter of the host family) “It was actually my decision to take part in the programme. My room is now used by Fadwa's family while I live with my sister. I have done this before and I am happy with the arrangement. I told my friends about our new guests and we all are friends now. We discuss many things about clothes, religion, and we share our opinions about gender roles. Once dad was doing kitchen work and Fadwa was astonished; she said that was a woman's job! I think we learn a lot from differences. We use a lot of Google translation tools and body language to communicate.”

What are you gaining from this hosting experience?

(Dmitir, 49, Host) “The experience has been a positive one, despite living in a conservative neighborhood including members of the extreme right party. Friends have been especially supportive, donating clothes and food. When I tell them that I am hosting a refugee, I sometimes see guilt in their eyes.

They congratulate me and they tell me that what I've done is good. But you can tell that it is not something they are willing to do themselves.

I had a teacher once, who told me that every moment should be spent learning.

They definitely have been a great teacher for our family for the past few months. We will all become better people through this process.”

Barbara Hendricks, the Goodwill Ambassador added:

“I saw many families for the last few days, and one thing is clear to me, that solidarity and generosity is the only solution. What I saw today is a very good example which I will take back to the leaders of Europe.”

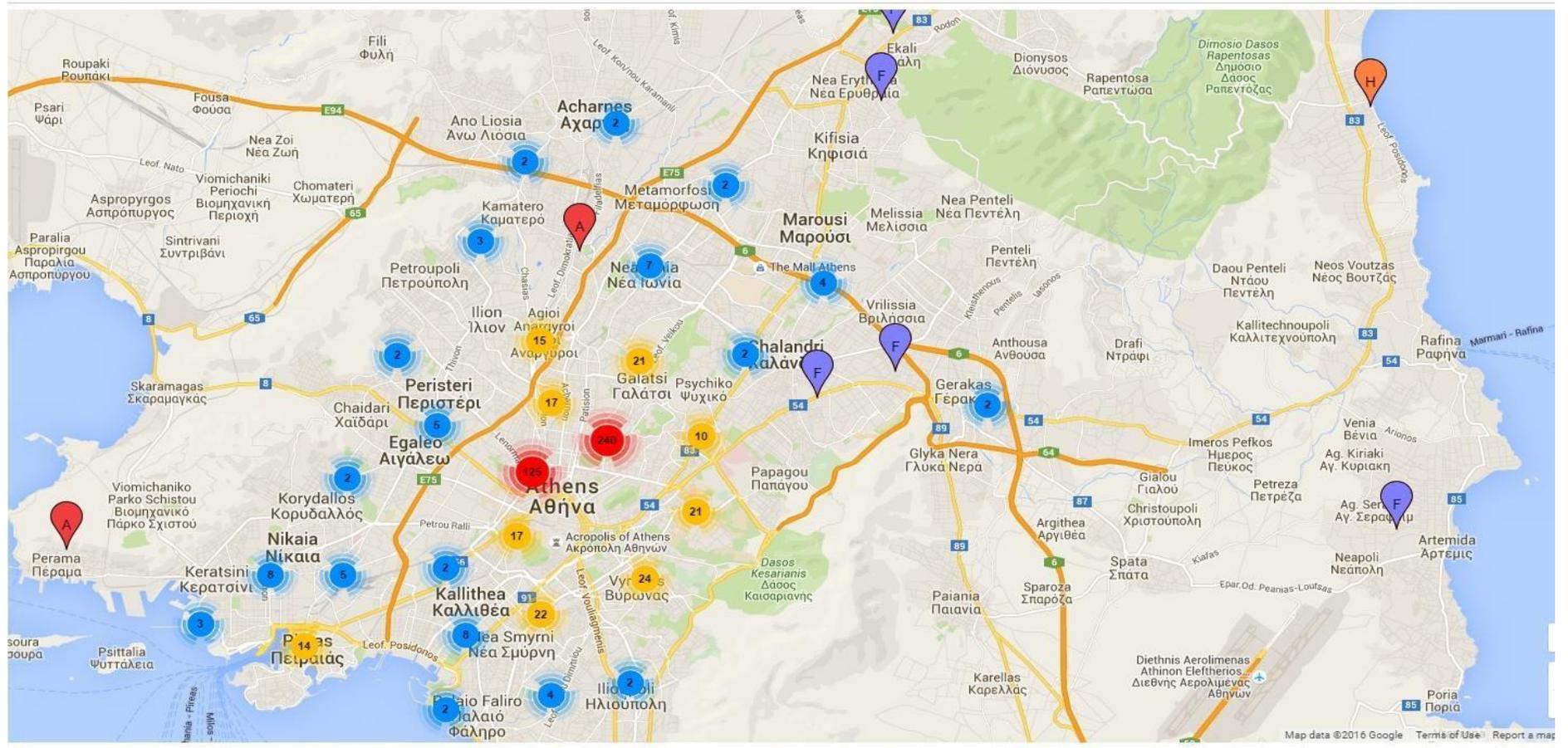


The host, Dmitir and Fadwa's child, during the interview with the Goodwill Ambassador. © UNHCR/Won-Na Cha.

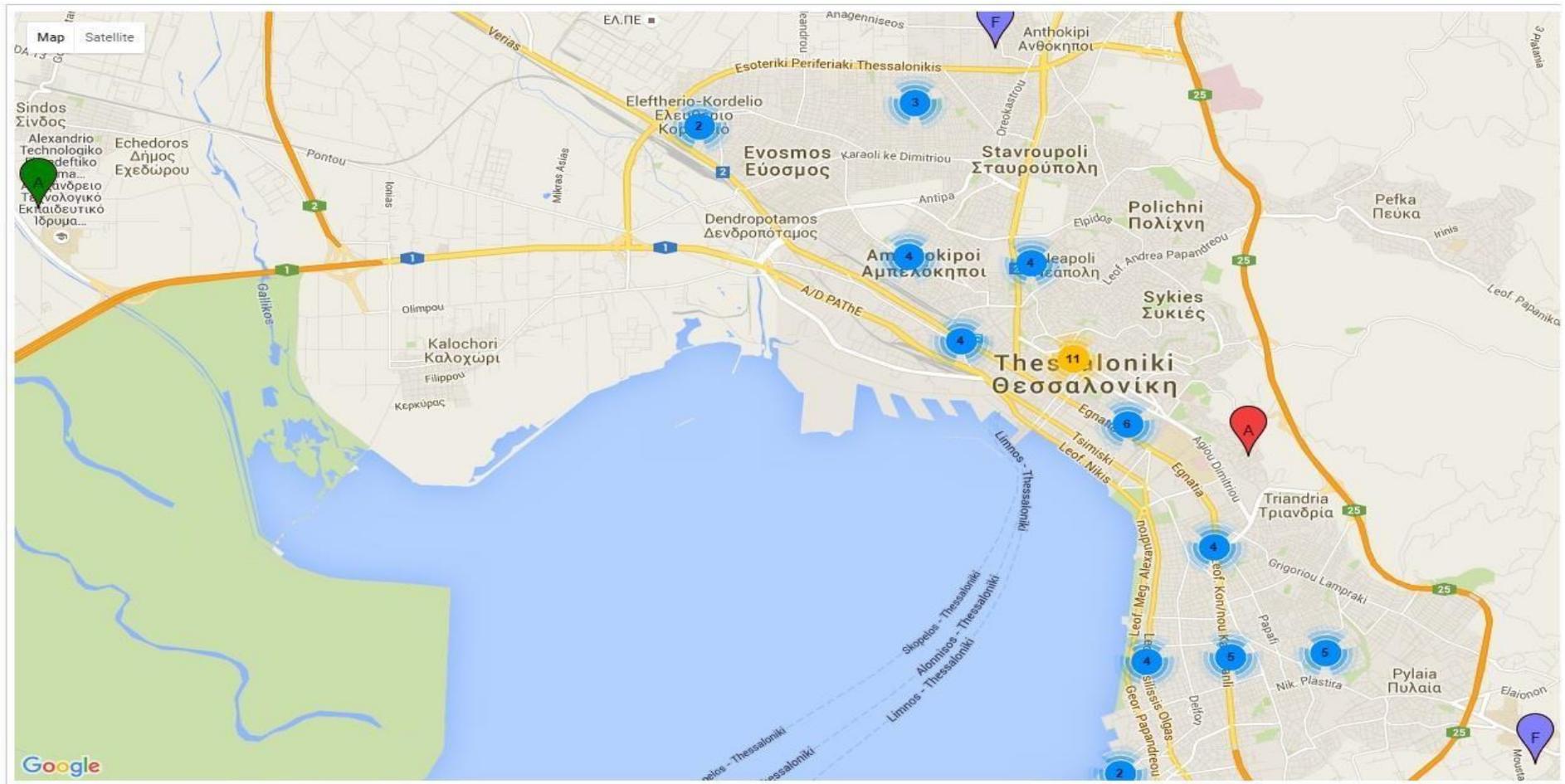


UNHCR Honorary Lifetime Goodwill Ambassador Barbara Hendricks spoke with Fadwa, a Syrian refugee who was living with a Greek host family. The project is part of UNHCR's accommodation scheme in Greece working with NGO partner Solidarity Now and funded by the EU. The family had hosted Fadwa and her two children Sham and Louay because they could not sit by and watch this tragedy without doing something. Fadwa said she felt safe and that she was really living in her new family. © UNHCR/Paul Wu.

MAP OF ACCOMMODATION - ATTICA (I)



MAP OF ACCOMMODATION - THESSALONIKI (II)



-  ADDMA
-  ARSIS
-  ILIAKTIDA
-  NOSTOS
-  PRAKSIS
-  SOLIDARITY
-  UNHCR

MAPS OF ACCOMMODATION - LESVOS (III) AND KOS (IV)

