



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

**23,047**

Persons that benefited from the Accommodation for Relocation project since November 2015

**21,114**

Accommodation places with services for relocation candidates/other asylum seekers established since January 2016 in line with UNHCR policy on alternatives to camps

**704**

Accommodation places for unaccompanied children established by UNHCR in Greece

**5,361**

Asylum seekers transported by UNHCR to the Regional Asylum Offices for full registration of their asylum claim

**74,261**

Number of winter items distributed

**128**

Water and Sanitation facilities (prefab showers and toilets) provided to partners and cleaned on monthly basis

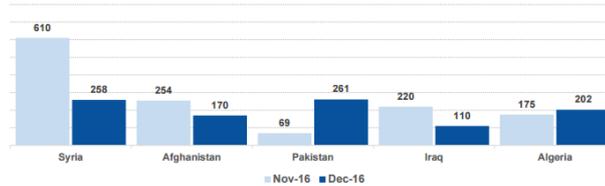
**2,108**

Shelter upgrading solutions (family tents, Refugee Housing Units, metal/folding beds) provided in mainland in December

**42**

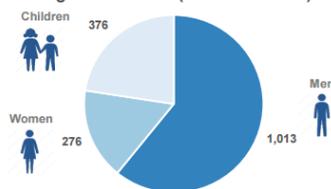
Inter-agency coordination sectoral working groups established and chaired/co-chaired by UNHCR at country and field levels

Top nationalities of arrivals in Greece



Source: Hellenic Police. Partial data.

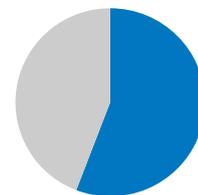
Age and Gender (December 2016)



Source: Hellenic Police. Partial data.

**Funding USD 300 million** requested

Gap  
44%



Funded  
61%

**USD 181.2 million** received

### UNHCR Presence

Staff: 633 in total.

**365 staff members: national (278) and international (87)**

**227** staff under Affiliated Workforce arrangements

**80** national staff deployed in support of Greek authorities

#### Technical Unit

**9** Shelter and Site Planning staff (**4** international, **5** national)

**8** Site Management support staff (**5** international, **3** national)

Offices: 13 in total.

**1** Representation office Athens

**6** Offices on the mainland (Thessaloniki, Polykastro, Larissa, Ioannina, Attica, Evros)

**6** Offices on the islands (Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros, Kos, Rhodes)

**5** WASH staff planning (**3** international **2** national)

**1** Health (**1** national)

## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

**Activities to respond to the harsh weather conditions, together with transfers from the Greek islands to the mainland**, continued in December, while temperatures plummeted and there was heavy snowfall in large parts of the country. Sites that were unsuitable for winter, like Petra Olympou, Kipselochori and Tsepelovo, were emptied, and alternative accommodation was found for their residents. In eight government-run sites on the mainland, where UNHCR assumed the replacement of tents with prefab housing units, the latter's number increased from 500 to 745 prefabs, equipped with electricity and kerosene heaters, with a total capacity up to 3,800 persons. In total, by the end of December, UNHCR acquired primary responsibility for making fit for winter 16 out of 46 refugee accommodation sites. For the remaining ones, winterization interventions were progressively assigned by the Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) to other actors, such as NRC, DRC, IFRC, IRC, IOM, Oxfam and ASB, with the support of the European Commission-Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). One of the remaining challenges, to be addressed by the MoMP and the Ministry of Defence is the supply of heating and cooking facilities. *More on winter-related activities can be found under Mainland response/Shelter, Core relief items and WASH below.*

- UNHCR is active, through a variety of interventions, in **all 16 sites remaining open in Northern Greece, Epirus, Central Greece and Attica** hosting over **6,762 asylum-seekers**. As requested by the Greek authorities, UNHCR provided **Site Management Support in four sites**: Nea Kavala, Alexandria, Lagadikia and Vasilika. Activities included installation of prefabricated houses, provision of heating solutions, upgrading of the electrical infrastructure, installation of safety devices and trainings on fire hazard, as well as distributions of winter clothes and footwear. In December, evacuation activities coordinated by the MoMP, UNHCR and IOM continued at the refugee sites in Cherso, Serres, Drama and Kavala. Cherso was officially closed, while the other three sites were temporarily evacuated in November by the authorities and IOM in order to proceed to winterization works that will last for a few months. In line with its protection mandate, UNHCR also provided **protection services and monitoring** in all sites throughout the country. Furthermore, the organization continued to offer **accommodation for relocation candidates and vulnerable asylum-seekers**, to support the European Union Relocation Program and in line with its [policy on alternatives to camps](#). In addition, UNHCR facilitated the transfer of refugees to the accommodation facilities and to appointments at the Regional Asylum offices in mainland Greece, for the full lodging of their asylum claims.
- Non-food items (NFIs)**. In December, UNHCR continued the distribution of winter items conducted in all sites in October and November, by delivering to the refugees and migrants **winter clothing and footwear donated by ZARA, UNIQLO, Falke and YoungOne**. In December, UNHCR continued the distribution of winter items conducted in all sites in October and November, by delivering to the refugees and migrants **winter clothing and footwear donated by ZARA, UNIQLO, Falke and YoungOne**. **7,703 (such as jackets, blouses, trousers and boots) were provided in seven sites in Northern Greece. Distribution was conducted via SP/UNHCR. 4,643 items were handed over to volunteer organizations for kiosk distribution in 5 sites in Epirus and in Alexandria.** In Alexandria, the clothes were handed over to the volunteer group Refugee Support, for distribution through the kiosk system already in place. In Nea Kavala, the clothes were distributed through the community free shop set up and run by the volunteer group Drop in the Ocean. This system allowed asylum-seekers to choose and try on their items in a more dignifying and relaxed manner, which was highly appreciated by the population at the site. Together with winter clothing, UNHCR also distributed additional NFIs, such as thermal blankets (2,693), hygiene items (2,325) and portable solar lights (350). **In total, 74,261 NFIs were provided to asylum-seekers in site in Greece during December.**



*Asylum-seekers at the refugee accommodation site in Nea Kavala wearing hats donated to UNHCR by ZARA © UNHCR / December 2016*

- Upon request by the authorities, UNHCR moved people from Cherso and Malakasa to temporary apartments and hotels at special rates.** UNHCR also transferred some 3,500 asylum seekers from the islands to the mainland, of whom 1,500 to apartments or hotels and some 440, in coordination with the authorities, to appropriate sites fit for winter. In addition, approximately 5,000 asylum seekers have been transferred since August from sites to accommodation in either hotels or apartments in the mainland.
- In an effort to reduce overcrowding on the islands, the Greek Asylum Service prioritized the referral of all vulnerable cases to be further processed on the mainland.**
- On 5 December, UNHCR co-chaired cash working group organized with ECHO and the government a strategic planning workshop regarding cash assistance for 2017. UNHCR also finalized the selection of a financial service provider, to deliver prepaid cards for its cash assistance scheme. By the end of the year, UNHCR was supporting with cash assistance over 8,000 asylum seekers in 13 sites across the country, from a total of over 16,000

beneficiaries, in both UNHCR-managed accommodation and government-run sites. This represents more than a quarter of the total refugee and migrant population in Greece as of the end of 2016.

- A verification exercise in order to expand cash-based interventions in 2017 took place from 8-15 December for relocation candidates residing in hotels and buildings in Athens. As of 31 December, UNHCR verified 6,371 people.
- Poor living conditions in several sites, combined with a prevailing feeling of uncertainty, particularly on the islands, continued to fuel despair and frustration among asylum-seekers. On 11 December, following a fight among asylum seekers on Chios, shots were thrown in the air by the owner of a nearby restaurant. On Lesbos, protests at the Reception and Identification Center (RIC) in Moria occurred on a regular basis, affecting activities on site, including the registration of vulnerable individuals and transfers to alternative shelters in the mainland. On Kos, asylum seekers from Pakistan started a hunger strike in the RIC.

On 1 December, a group of 28 third country nationals (25 Pakistanis and 3 Turks) were returned to Turkey through the border point of Kipoi, in Evros area, North-Eastern Greece. None of them applied for asylum. On 12 December, 29 people were returned to Dikili in Turkey, under the EU-Turkey Statement.

At a meeting of the Central Union of Greece's Municipalities held in Thessaloniki on 1-3 December, the Mayors of Greece addressed a joint declaration to the Minister of Migration Policy, requesting the decongestion of the refugee accommodation sites, the immediate improvement of the living conditions there, and the fair allocation of the asylum-seekers across the country.

On 8 December, the European Commission adopted a fourth Recommendation and Joint Action Plan with the Greek authorities for the gradual resumption of Dublin transfers to Greece. On the same day, the Greek Prime Minister announced the suspension of an increase of the VAT on the islands of the northern Aegean affected by the refugee crisis. Besides, the European Commission's reports on progress made under the European Agenda on Migration was issued, which urged the Member States to increase and regularize the pledges under the relocation scheme.

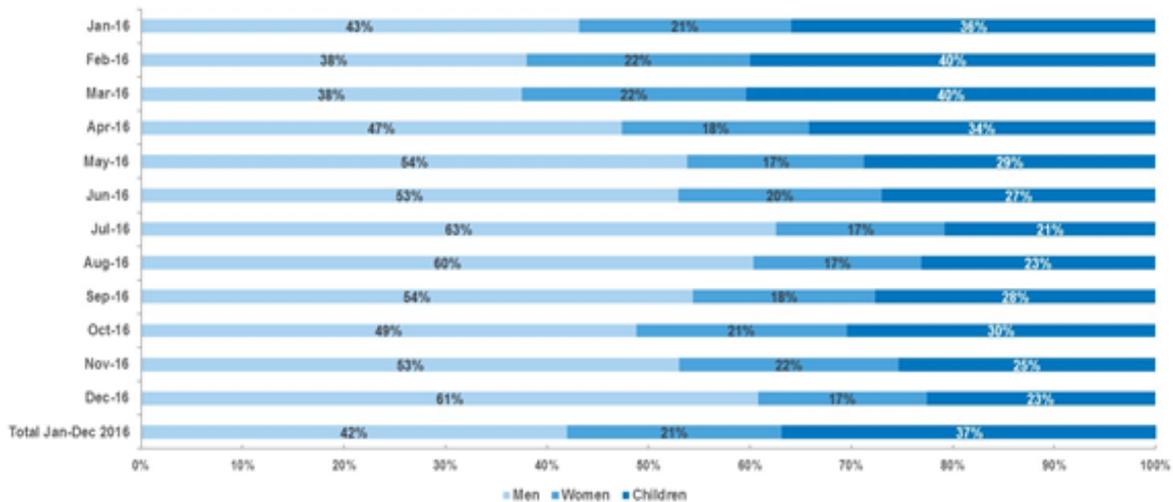
A guidance was sent to the island RAO/A Asylum Units and started the registration procedures for those from nationalities of over 25% recognition rate (mainly Palestinians, Afghans, Iraqis and Iranians) through the admissibility border procedure.

The situation in the Evros region, with increase in arrivals of third country nationals, is being closely monitored by UNHCR's protection team. Delays in the transfers of new arrivals in police detention facilities continue to raise serious concerns, as up 130 PoCs are held in the Fylakio Pre-Removal Centre pending referral to the RIC, as transfers take place gradually and in small groups. The main obstacle remains the capacity of the Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) and the transfers of those completing reception and identification procedures to accommodation sites. UNHCR is following up with the inter-ministerial body KEPOM (Central Coordinating Organization for Migration), to ensure quicker transfers without undermining the quality of the procedures.

On 19 December, a new law was passed (4445/2016), to address the overall social integration and social cohesion systems in Greece, including with the creation of two new directorates at the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity. These will deal with social integration, social cohesion and the fight against poverty, the creation and review of the mandate of a number of policy and decision making bodies such as the National Commission for Social Protection and others, and the adoption of evaluation tools for the national monitoring and coordination mechanism on social integration amongst others. While there is no specific reference as to whether the refugees are covered by this law, UNHCR shall pursue also in light of the increased focus on integration.

Nationalities	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16
Syrian Arab Republic	30,309	29,412	14,399	1,268	525	459	510	1,112	866	1,021	610	258
Afghanistan	18,846	13,943	6,133	580	270	215	201	324	479	410	254	170
Pakistan	2,243	1,539	1,880	637	231	233	345	737	513	105	69	261
Iraq	11,964	9,134	2,515	381	162	183	104	327	497	541	220	110
Iran	2,193	1,593	674	73	64	51	73	123	155	216	70	30
Other	1,860	1,445	1,370	711	469	413	687	824	570	677	768	836
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,415</b>	<b>57,066</b>	<b>26,971</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>1,721</b>	<b>1,554</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>3,447</b>	<b>3,080</b>	<b>2,970</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>1,665</b>

Arrivals by nationality per month during 2016. Source: Hellenic Police/Hellenic coast Guard based on partial data.



## INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

- On 12 December, UNHCR supported and participated in the mission of the ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) for the High Commissioner’s Structured Dialogue, in Athens and Lesbos which involved meetings with key internal and external counterparts and partnership workshops.



## MAINLAND RESPONSE



*In Thermopyles, “Healthy Relationships at Home, in Schools and the Community” Training was held as part of the 16 Days of activism Community Based Projects. © UNHCR/Z. Hakim.*

### Protection

- **Provision of information.** UNHCR continued to conduct group and individual information sessions on asylum in Greece, family reunification and relocation and on the procedures following the pre-registration exercise for the full lodging of asylum claims, with the [Greek Asylum Service](#) and EASO.

- **Child protection (CP).** Joint assessments visits of representatives from the Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) and Ministry of Labour, members of the Child Protection Steering Working Group took place in three sites in the Attica region, Schisto, Elionas and Elefsina.

The sites in North Greece were also visited, and recommendations to the MoMP will be made after all 13 sites have been assessed. The objective of the assessment is to review if the sites are suitable for the establishment or continuation of safe areas for unaccompanied minors. There is an alarming increase of Sexual and Gender Based Violence incidents directly affecting children that are being reported, the CP team provided guidance with regard to the necessary procedures for the protection and assistance of the survivors. Additionally, CP team continues to follow-up on numerous cases of UASC identified. There are currently 41 UASC at the sites of Oinofyta, Volos and Ritsona. UNHCR continues to work with authorities and partners to refer them to National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) and the appropriate services. In Attica, International Red Cross (IRC) has engaged a lawyer to provide legal counselling and aid to the UAC living in the Safe Space of Elaionas II.

- “Blue Dots” Child and Family Support Hubs - Child protection: The site of Cherso was evacuated during December and therefore the actors offering services under the Blue Dot scheme were reoriented to other areas in Northern Greece to assist where needs exist. Discussions have been initiated with international and local actors in order to implement an exit strategy for UNHCR and the gradual hand over to them of the Blue Dot Hubs. The refugees in the city of Thessaloniki, as well as in the sites of Lagadikia, Nea Kavala, Diavata and Alexandria receive the services offered by the Blue Dot Hubs. In Attica also Elliniko I, Elliniko III and Schisto Blue Dots continue to be operational. On the islands Blue Dot Hubs exist in Kara Tepe, Lesvos and in Kos.”
- **The chairs of the Child Protection Working Group (UNHCR and Save the Children)** held an orientation mid-December on Best Interest Determination (BID) for eight members of the BID panel that have been established as to review cases initially for the UK Dubs Program. UNHCR and partners will support the UK Home Office to implement the Lord Dubs amendment- section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016-(official criteria and quota for Greece still to be published) through preparing Best Interest Determination (BID) reports for children that will fit the criteria. A second orientation day will be held in January.
- **FO Attica** continues to receive accommodation requests from asylum seekers transferred from the islands. The system of transfers and allocation of the sites is managed by the inter-ministerial body of the Greek authorities (KEPOM) with UNHCR assisting in transportation. However, a large number of asylum seekers arriving from the islands prefer to find accommodation by themselves. Many families are reported homeless afterwards and referred to UNHCR for accommodation solutions. However, unless they are vulnerable individuals, FO Attica cannot offer further assistance as regards accommodation to the to the asylum seekers who refuse to stay in reception centres offered by the authorities.
- Some 140 persons were held at the **RIC of Evros (Fylakio closed facility)**. On December, the RIC was sufficiently staffed with the arrival of around 25 permanent civil servants, but challenges remained as regards coordination, human resources management and workplace. UNHCR will undertake basic training sessions in early 2017. UNHCR also raised concerns on the number of UASCs in the Evros RIC, who are majorly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and stay for prolonged periods till their transfer to open facilities.
- **Skype for pre-registration** On December, Thermopyles and Oinofyta continued to address residents who complain of not having access to skype in order to register their asylum claims. UNHCR also raised its concern to the authorities as regards the delays in transfers of new arrivals to the RIC of Evros for reception and identification procedures, which results in prolonged detention in border guard police stations. UNHCR Representative visited the area on 21–22 December. Due to the lengthy waiting period, many asylum seekers decide to leave the sites independently and seek accommodation in other places in Greece.
- **Support to accommodation capacity for asylum seekers.** The reception capacity established in Greece by UNHCR and its partners, with EU funding, in support of the relocation scheme, exceeded the target of 20,000 on 01

December 2016, with a total of 20,003 places. As of 30 December, the total reached 21,114 places (105%). As of 30 December, 7,553 Relocation candidates have left the country or are scheduled to leave by February 2017. On 8 December, the Migration Minister mentioned that the EU should carry out 2,000 relocation transfers per month, and then the current total applicants for relocation should be transferred to other Membership States by the end of 2017, latest.



New containers have been installed in the Thermopiles site as part of winter preparations. © UNHCR/W. Gavala.

## Health

In Koutsochero site, MdM started to be present on site from 20 December, twice a week, along with Red Cross once per week. UNHCR following up referrals of UAC to EKKA in cooperation with medical actors and Public Prosecutor.

## Education

- The Minister of Education (MoE) expressed his commitment to increase the number of refugee children in schools before Christmas. The plan was to enroll 5,994 boys and girls in informal education classes, while the Minister would launch a plan for vocational training focusing on the adolescents' education from 2017.
- Informal and formal education activities continued in Northern Greece. Out of the 118 children from Softex who have been enrolled in formal education, 68 will be enrolled in elementary school, 14 in high school and 36 in Kindergarten on site from mid-January. In Kalochori, MoE representatives announced that the formal education program for primary and secondary school students will commence in 2017. In Alexandria, Veria and Derveni, informal education classes were being prepared. Formal education was on hold as vaccinations were completed for children of school age. In Karamanlis, Acts of Mercy conducted English language courses for the adults and children. In Central Greece, formal education activities will start from 2017, while informal education continued in the sites.

## Shelter, Core Relief Items and WASH

In order to ensure heating while electrification works were finalized, through its partner Samaritan's Purse, UNHCR distributed a total of **175 kerosene heaters in Nea Kavala**. Samaritan's Purse also distributed 18-liter jerry cans of fuel to each prefab house, replenished every three days, with the extra provision of a 6-liter jerry can per household. UNHCR, through the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), also provided **69 electric heaters** to Lagadikia, to be used in the containers that have been partitioned and have two rooms. UNHCR delivered **256 fire blankets** to Nea Kavala (70), Alexandria (106) and Lagadikia (80), and **39 dry powder extinguishers** (6-kg each) for every fourth prefab house in **Alexandria**. Through Samaritan's Purse, UNHCR also installed **183 carbon monoxide detectors** to Nea Kavala (120) and Alexandria (57), and **180 smoke detectors** in each prefab house in Nea Kavala. All equipment was provided as part of comprehensive measures to address safety concerns regarding fire and heating, in addition to trainings.



Awareness material displayed on prefab houses in Alexandria site and fire safety training conducted in Lagadikia site by the Greek Fire Brigades, in collaboration with UNHCR, for refugee men, women and children © UNHCR / December 2016

- The progress in making sites fit for winter through the installation of prefab housing and heaters, also seems to have decreased the general unrest within the sites.
- **Blanket distribution.** An additional distribution of winter clothing was underway in collaboration with Samaritan's Purse following the generous donations by Zara, UNIQLO and YoungONE of up to 200,000 items. This is the third country-wide blanket distribution after a similar one conducted in April.
- The capacity of **Lagadikia** is being increased in preparation to host potential transfers from **Oreokastro** camp.
- An upgrade of the electrical system was completed in Lagadikia and all prefab units acquired access to heating through individual air-conditioner units. 90 Prefab units were installed in Softex by the MoMP, and families were provided with kerosene heaters by IFRC. In **Diavata**, 96 emergency prefab units were installed on site by UNHCR as contingency at the request of MoMP. In **Vagiochori**, the Army continue ground works to provide hot water, installed two shower containers that have a solar heating system, and have setup two shades above the basins

areas. Also many local organizations actively distributed hot meals, cooking pots, wood for fuel and winter clothes.

- In **Volos**, the construction of the partition and installation of the heating system in the main building was completed, bringing the total capacity of the site up to 150 individuals. In **Thermopiles**, the ground works for the heating system started and in the meantime, UNHCR provided alternative solutions. The installation of a heating system attracted individuals to the site, and 80 asylum seekers arrived to **Ritsona** by their own means.
- In **Schisto**, the upgrade of the electrical work finished and 150 prefab units and 98 electric heaters were delivered.
- In **Thermopiles**, the refugees and migrants were given electric blankets, saving light bulbs and extension cables.
- WASH upgrading continued in various areas. In **Koutsochero**, DRC distributed hygiene kits/cleaning tools, while IOM distributed bottled water, as water supply was disrupted temporarily in the site.
- A washing machine was installed by UNHCR in **Lavrio**, and the field team along with focal persons of community-based initiatives informed the residents about the hours of usage and provided information on the functions.

## Cash Based Intervention (CBI)

- At a workshop organized by MoMP along with ECHO on 5 December, the Multipurpose Cash Transfer project in Greece and how to scale up this assistance countrywide in 2017 were discussed. The participants talked about the need to be covered in line with MEB (Minimum Expenditure Basket) proposals.
- On 8 December, UNHCR started a data validation exercise for around 12,000 asylum seekers in the accommodation scheme in Athens and Thessaloniki, who will be among the first to benefit from the distribution of UNHCR cash cards in 2017. Meanwhile, UNHCR is continuing to provide cash assistance through its partners. The cash cards will be distributed during the month of February, and in other sites, before March. From April, the distribution will be extended to every registered person of concern in Greece. In total, 6,371 persons were verified after 17 working days. The verification exercise also served as an opportunity to address protection issues such as separated children, legal cases and family reunifications. Cases requiring follow-up with asylum services and persons with specific needs were identified and UNHCR is following up on them.
- Cash registration by partners in sites throughout mainland Greece continued with no major issues. In northern Greece, IFRC and UNHCR's partner Catholic Relief Service (CRS) completed the registration and distribution of cards in five sites. Cash for January 2017 will be loaded in two weeks. In central Greece, information sessions and stakeholder meetings took place to inform refugees and migrants about the cash programme. In Attica, cards have been distributed which were highly appreciated. A helpline was activated where the refugees and migrants can call and ask for more information and clarification related to the usage.
- The first cash amounts were loaded on the cards in the last week of December in Northern and Central Greece. Partner CRS/Caritas is providing constant assistance to solve issues such as the lack of money in the card, or blockage due to a wrong pin number, and set up a help desk.

## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- **The CWC Working Group with partners** organized several community-based interventions to celebrate the season's festivities in northern Greece. The PoCs enjoyed activities such as screening a Christmas video, painting and handcraft, games and gifts. In **Vasilika/Redestos**, Caritas organized a Christmas workshop, while UNHCR set up a free shop with gifts. In **Alexandria and Veria**, UNHCR and DRC supported the interaction between host and PoC communities, through the joint-lit up of the Christmas tree that UNHCR donated to the Lagadikia village. UNHCR, DRC and MDM also escorted refugee children to the local Primary school to attend Christmas celebrations. UNHCR donated two CD players to the school and distributed UNHCR bookmarks to the students. In **Diavata**, UNHCR provided music instruments and sound equipment to the Afghan community, and purchased items for the beauty salon classes. In **Nea Kavala**, UNHCR's partner Save the Children facilitated the excursions of 90 children to the Christmas village in Kilkis.
- **Installation and upgrading the wifi** in sites where they have weak coverage are underway, in **Elefsina, Koutsochero, Eleonas I, II, III and Elliniko I, II, III, Volos, Koutsochero and Elefsina**. Additionally, NetHope in cooperation with Solidarity Now installed a TV satellite dish. Also UNHCR and GRNET, Belgium based Rescue Telecom, have also installed stronger Wifi connection in Schisto.
- **UNHCR in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy in Athens** developed a mini-lexicon to facilitate basic communication between PoCs and service providers at the sites in Greece, through 12,000 copies in Arabic, Farsi, Kurmanji, Sorani, Urdu and French.

- **Recreational activities towards the festive season** continued. In Northern Greece, UNHCR distributed Christmas gifts to all children in **Kalohori**, and organized a free gift shop for those in **Vasilika/Redestos**, and with partner Solidarity Now, supported PoCs to participate in the Thessaloniki Christmas activities. On 29 December, volunteers and UNHCR in **Elefsina** organized a party for the children living in the site, while the local community participated and offered presents and traditional dishes and the PoC performed traditional dances. On 30 December, UNHCR and the Traffic Police organized an event on road safety for 25 children from **Oreokastro site**, at the White Tower of Thessaloniki.
- A community election took place in **Elefsina** and all adults were eligible to vote. The whole procedure was successful and seven community representatives were elected. The first resolution was to create cleaning teams for the common areas in cooperation with the cleaning company appointed by the Ministry of Defense.

## ISLANDS RESPONSE

### Protection

- **Support to new arrivals** UNHCR continues to identify and assist new arrivals with specific needs. Core relief items are distributed and information on legal procedures is provided. **On Kos**, UNHCR is present at the RIC to cover several functions, such as provision of information on asylum procedures, rights and obligations; identification and referral of vulnerable individuals; support to alternative accommodation for vulnerable individuals etc. UNHCR also continues to implement a transport service between the RIC and the town for extremely vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers. **On Lesbos**, UNHCR has been working on strengthening its interventions, including child protection, sexual and gender based violence prevention and response and legal counselling.
- **Registration in the Regional Asylum Office.** **On Samos**, the RAO informed that, from 2017, it would start examining the claims of nationalities with a recognition rated above 25% (Afghans, Iraqis and Iranians among others). Claims will be assessed under the admissibility procedure. RAO's capacity has significantly increased with the arrival of 15 new caseworkers. The RAOs in all islands are also continuing with the agreed practice to issue asylum cards without geographical restriction for 'eligible' asylum seekers and to refer these cases to UNHCR for transportation and accommodation modalities.
- Throughout December, in Moria RIC on Lesbos, several communities protested against the slow pace of asylum procedures and persisting uncertainty over their future. Since late September, UNHCR assisted in the transfer of 370 people holding asylum seeker's card from Lesbos to the mainland. Another 154 people were identified as eligible for transfer. UNHCR continued to work closely with the local authorities in search of alternative shelter for unaccompanied and separated children, as well as for people at heightened risk.
- Besides, during December, UNHCR organized on **Lesbos** three trainings for approximately 50 local lawyers and humanitarian workers on asylum procedures in Greece; LGBTI asylum seekers; and the risk and prevention of survival sex in refugee sites.
- **UNHCR in Rhodes** continued to address various issues as a result of the absence of organized reception capacity on South Dodecanese. Facilitation of interpretation and referral of families to reception facilities were on-going in December. The team also visited the detention facility of Rhodes and held information sessions for detainees.
- A UNHCR-RIS-FRA training on **Leros** covered the following thematic areas: International and European framework on refugee protection, the Greek legal framework on the role of the Reception and Identification Service, Site management and basic principles, Communicating with Communities, Identification and Referral of vulnerable persons, Prevention and response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence and child protection. Participants included 45 persons working in the Lepida RIC of and at the PIKPA open accommodation facility for asylum-seekers in Leros, were trained for the first time. **UNHCR on Leros** was informed by the Asylum Service that admissibility interviews for Somali nationals will start in early 2017, when the interpreter arrives. So far, there has been no issuance of decisions on the admissibility of non-Syrians or decisions on the admissibility on the second instance for Syrians.
- **In Chios**, due to the absence of a RIS director, the decisions with restriction of liberty, where also the asylum number is indicated, are not provided to the new arrivals. **On Leros**, the situation is similar. RIS has shared no updates concerning the arrival of a Director and schedule for registration. This may impact the start of the 25-day period of restriction in the RIC, and it may be that refugees and migrants will be under restriction of movement longer than that defined by law. The RIS **on Leros** is exploring the possibility of sending the decisions of confinement to be signed at the headquarters of the Reception and Identification Service in Athens, as by previous experience.

**On Samos**, UNHCR and its partner Save the Children continued to closely monitor the conditions and administrative treatment of around 90 unaccompanied children (UAC) –including at least 12 of them with

pending decisions from the Public Prosecutor regarding the appointment of a caregiver as their guardian– and up to 400 accompanied children who are present in the RIC. Some UASCs have been in the RIC for over six months already. UNHCR mobilized partners and authorities to speed up referrals to UAC shelters, provide specialized services and appropriate administrative treatment. UNHCR’s partner METAdrasi hosted 15 boys and 1 girl in their shelter for unaccompanied children. UNHCR initiated focus group discussions for Arab and Farsi speaking UASCs who are about to turn 18 years old.

- On Kos, following the arrivals of 43 UAC during December, the situation at the UASC area of the RIC is critical. Lack of space constrains them to sleep in the adult area and over-crowdedness is leading to outbursts of tension and violence. A consultant for transactional/survival sex visited Kos on 22-23 December to provide training for UNHCR staff and assess the situation in the different locations on the island.
- RIS informed UNHCR on Kos that they wish to assume the leadership of the individual case management of the UASC. UNHCR will give RIS its full support in the transition, including with capacity building. Besides, coordination meetings will take place with staff on the ground and standard operating procedures and pathways will be jointly discussed and agreed.
- UNHCR, together with the municipality of Chios, launched a bid to construct a fence in Souda, aiming at increasing security on the site.
- On all islands, fair and organized shelter allocation continues to remain a challenge.
- The AS operations are challenged by the no-show of applicants with pending wills to register their asylum applications. In the second week of December, the examination of the claims by nationalities with over 25% recognition rate (non-Syrians) under the admissibility procedures started on Leros and Chios, though no decision has been issued yet.

## Education

- The **Leros** Educational space, funded by UNHCR and implemented by Save the Children, started to operate at full capacity.
- **On Lesbos**, UNHCR and operational partners in **Kara Tepe** organized an end-of-the-year celebration for 50 children between the ages 4-14 years old. UNHCR also organized a ceremony to deliver educational equipment to several schools in **Kos and Kalymnos**, as a sign of gratitude to the host community.
- **On Lesbos**, approximately 15 asylum seekers of different ages and nationalities from **Moria, Kara Tepe** and alternative shelters, participated at the first pilot session of a European Commission online language program organized by UNHCR and the University of Aegean. By the end of the course, 1,000 refugees from Lesbos will have the chance to benefit from the online language classes.

## Health

- **On Kos**, the medical unit of Praksis started a second round of scabies treatment for unaccompanied children residing at the RIC.
- **On Kos**, UNHCR in partnership with WAHA ensured medical coverage through its hotline during the night and at the ARGOS accommodation facility during the day, through its mobile clinic. Furthermore considering that the residents of the annex of the RIC have no access to medical services inside the RIC, WAHA has stepped-in and provided throughout December 486 medical examinations.
- **On Leros**, UNHCR’s partner, WAHA, is providing primary medical services. In December, WAHA medical staff conducted 276 individual consultations to refugees and migrants. In addition to services provided by RIS and partners, the UNHCR medical mini-van provided transportation to more than 550 asylum seekers from Lepida RIC to the PIKPA Facility and Leros Municipal Hospital. In support of the medical actors in RIC, PIKPA and Leros Municipal Hospital, 146 medical booklets were delivered in three languages (English, Arabic and Greek).

## Shelter, Core Relief Items and WASH



*300 prefabricated containers are set up in Kara Tepe for the winter with the support of the European*

- During the month of December, UNHCR distributed **4,926** non-food items in sites across Lesvos. On Kos, **3,258** items of all types and categories were distributed for winterization, while on Leros, 2,136 items were delivered.
- On Chios, Samaritan's Purse completed technical works to increase the electrical power at the Souda site and installed new electric heaters with timers on 22 December.
- Some 120 prefabricated containers arrived on Lesvos out of 294 that are planned in total. In Kara Tepe, 43 families moved into the new structures. In Moria, the first out of four UNHCR rub halls was set up and heating system was installed. Three more are expected to be set up on the first weeks of January. The rub halls will be used by vulnerable single male and families in an effort to improve accommodation arrangements in the site.
- **On Kos**, the winterization of the tents placed at the annex of the RIC proceeded smoothly and the winterization for all 19 tents was concluded successfully. Heaters and chimneys were installed inside all tents, as well as fire extinguishers. Through its partner, Samaritan's Purse, UNHCR distributed 316 clothing items and 82 hygiene kits. At the same time, rehabilitation interventions related to electric needs were implemented at the accommodation area of the RIC and the area for unaccompanied and separated children.
- UNHCR/SP on Samos repaired the electrical hot water boilers for most of the showers in the RIC. On Kos, UNHCR/SP installed washing lines at the RIC's Annex.

## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- **A chess tournament** was organized in Lakki (Leros) on 27 December. Twenty two people, both asylum seekers and locals, participated under the instructions of the international chess player Tasos Pavlidis. On 29 December, 34 women accommodated at RIC and Pikpa played basketball, volleyball and practiced yoga. The activity was supported by volunteers of the organization Echo 100+.
- **On Lesvos**, some 150 children and their parents attended a children's play at the Municipal theatre, organized by the General Secretariat of Aegean Policy. UNHCR offered transportation and accompanied the asylum seekers.
- **On Kos**, guitar lessons and a sewing workshop started during December. Community members are working as trainers in these activities.

## WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR provides protection and assistance directly and through **25 partners** in 11 different sectors of intervention.
- UNHCR is also working closely **with the national and local authorities**, including the Ministry of Migration Policy; the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction; the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Shipping and Island Policy; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of National Defense; the Municipality of Athens; the Municipality of Thessaloniki and the Municipality of Livadia.

Sector of Intervention	National NGOs	International NGOs	United Nations	Authorities and others
<b>Protection</b>	GCR, Praksis, METAdrasi, ERP, Arsis, Solidarity Now	ICMC, DRC, IMC, Samaritan’s Purse	UNOPS	Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, Reception and Identification Service, Asylum Service
<b>Child Protection</b>	METAdrasi, Praksis, Arsis, Iliaktida	Save the Children, DRC, ICMC		
<b>Communicating with Communities</b>	GCR/GFR			
<b>NFI/Shelter</b>		Samaritan’s Purse, DRC	UNOPS	University of Aegean
<b>WASH</b>		Samaritan’s Purse, DRC, IRC, IMC		
<b>Site Management Support</b>		DRC		
<b>Health</b>		WAHA, Médecins du Monde, Faros, Intersos		
<b>Education</b>	Solidarity Now	Save the Children, DRC, Intersos		
<b>Public Awareness</b>	Tenet		UNOPS	
<b>Accommodation for Relocation</b>	Praksis, Nostos, Arsis, Solidarity Now, Iliaktida, CRS, Faros			Municipality of Athens (ADDMA), Municipality of Thessaloniki, Municipality of Livadia (KEDHL)
<b>Community mobilization</b>		Samaritan’s Purse, Intersos		



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The revised inter-agency **Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP)** for Europe, which was released on 10 June 2016, amounts to

USD 669.9 million. Under this plan, UNHCR is appealing for USD 380.3 million for additional support to affected countries in the eastern Mediterranean and the western Balkans in 2016. As regards Greece, UNHCR is appealing for 300.4 million USD. As of 31 December, the total recorded contributions for Greece amount to 181.3 million USD. By participating in the Plan, organizations commit to engaging in regional and national coordination mechanisms across Europe.

In December 2016, humanitarian actors released a new inter-agency [Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\)](#) for Europe, for the period January - December 2017, presenting requirements that amount to USD 690.9 million. Under this regional plan, total requirements for Greece amount to USD 525.9 million, out of which UNHCR is appealing for 263 million USD.

UNHCR extends its special thanks to major donors for the refugee emergency in Europe – the European Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom –

as well as to all government donors and private donors for their generous contributions. The financial support provided by donors who have contributed with non-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds, as well as by those who have contributed directly to the situation and the operation in Greece, allows to provide direct assistance and protection, and help find solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers in the country. In this changing operational context, UNHCR is appealing to donors to provide contributions that can be allocated as flexibly as possible.

UNHCR Greece Donors	Amount Recorded in USD
European Commission (DG Home)	121,162,583
European Commission (DG ECHO)	42,484,472
United Kingdom	6,770,470
Germany	3,382,187
Austria	2,265,006
Norway	1,770,120
Foundation BNP Paribas	1,481,481
Republic of Korea	800,000
Switzerland	377,551
The Church of Latter-day Saints	250,000
Stavros Niarchos Foundation	222,965
Vodafone Foundation	145,560
Ms Real Estate	101,215
International Olympic Committee	50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>181,263,611</b>

The major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016 are:

United States of America (200 M) | Sweden (95 M) | Priv Donors Spain (50 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | United Kingdom (45 M) | Norway (40 M) | Japan (24 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Priv Donors Republic of Korea (21 M) | Priv Donors Italy (20 M) | Priv Donors Japan (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Australia (15 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Priv Donors USA (14 M) | Priv Donors Sweden (14 M) | Germany (13 M) | Italy (10 M)

