

Greece

This year, **13,500 people arrived in Greece** by sea and land. While living conditions for asylum-seekers have generally improved in the mainland, serious gaps remain in the

overcrowded RICs of the islands where some people must remain for their asylum decisions. The **poor conditions increase protection risks**, including sexual and gender-based

violence and contribute to tension. **Children and the vulnerable are particularly affected.** This month there was repeated tension and violence in Moria, Lesbos' RIC.

42,732 refugees and migrants in Greece¹

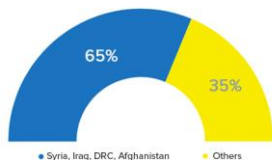
34,181 in the mainland

8,551 on the islands

33,445 eligible people received cash assistance from UNHCR this month

32,450 people have so far benefited from UNHCR accommodation²

10,292 people transferred from the islands to the mainland (UNHCR supported)³



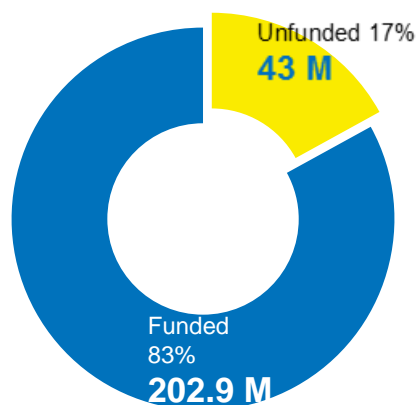
65% of arrivals in 2017 are from Syria, Iraq, DRC and Afghanistan

¹UNHCR estimates as of 31 July 2017
²Since the start of the programme in November 2015
³Between June 2016 and June 2017

FUNDING (AS OF 5 SEPTEMBER)

USD 245.9 M

requested for the Greece operation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

394 National Staff

75 International Staff

Offices:

1 Branch Office in Athens

5 Mainland Offices in Attika, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Larissa, Evros

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



© UNHCR/Despoina Anagnostou Greece. A friendship garden for refugees by Mama Marla on Samos. 7 July 2017

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

- UNHCR works with the Government, local authorities and NGOs to provide urban accommodation and cash assistance to asylum-seekers in Greece, with funding from ECHO's Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation (ESTIA).
- 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, 33,445 eligible asylum-seekers received cash assistance in Greece from UNHCR, and the UNHCR-funded Greece Cash Alliance partners.
- Also in July, UNHCR provided 18,427 places for the urban accommodation of vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees. UNHCR works with the Government, municipalities and NGOs around Greece to house refugees in rented accommodation. The programme helps provide beneficiaries with a sense of normalcy and facilitates their access to services, including education, and their eventual integration for those who will remain in Greece. The host population also benefits from the rented accommodation.
- This month, the municipality of Trikala joined the programme with 420 additional places, making it the fifth municipality after Athens, Thessaloniki, Livadia, and a consortium of municipalities in Crete.

Protection

- UNHCR supports the Greek Asylum Service by helping upon request the caseworkers with on-the-job training and advice on drafting decisions and conducting interviews. In July, UNHCR helped in 1,342 instances and 30 interviews.
- UNHCR also provides legal aid through partners to asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. This includes legal aid on asylum proceedings and access to rights, as well as on family reunion under the Dublin Regulation to other EU Member States. From January 2016 and the end of July 2017, 6,496 people received legal aid.

Child Protection

- As the number of 2,400 unaccompanied children in Greece exceeds the 1,200 available places in shelters for their accommodation, UNHCR along with partners support the authorities develop diverse alternative care arrangements. One such arrangement is

Supported Independent Living where children are assisted by dedicated guardians and support teams.

- In July, UNHCR also provided 716 places in shelters for unaccompanied children through partners.
- UNHCR also provides advice and technical support to the Government, as well as expert staff to EKKA, the agency responsible for the referral of unaccompanied children (UAC) to shelters.
- In addition, UNHCR coordinates with humanitarian actors and stakeholders to monitor and develop Standard Operating Procedures and minimum standards to enhance the protection of children.

Sexual and Gender Based Violence

- The overcrowded conditions in the reception centres of the islands lead to poor shelter allocation and a lack of privacy, which heighten the risk for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). This adds to the volatility of refugees already suffering from the sudden breakdown of family and community structures as a result of their forced displacement.
- UNHCR co-chairs the SGBV Working Group with the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) and the General Secretariat on Gender Equality to coordinate the prevention and response to SGBV in Greece. The SGBV WG has developed Standard Operating Procedures, while in Thessaloniki and Lesbos, regional SGBV sub-WGs coordinate on specific issues in the field where the risk of SGBV is even higher.
- UNHCR and partners have also developed referral pathways for refugee-hosting sites so that survivors of SGBV receive appropriate help.
- Finally, UNHCR conducts trainings for state and non-state actors in Greece to strengthen the prevention and response to SGBV nationally.

Health

- UNHCR works to ameliorate refugees' and asylum-seekers' access to healthcare, working together with the Ministry of Health and other partners including by co-chairing the Health Working Group.
- A particular problem in Greece is the lack of public mental health institutions. UNHCR is developing referral pathways to direct those who are affected by mental health issues to private institutions.
- UNHCR also funds specific health services in Lesbos, as well as in Attika where no other health actor is present.

Durable Solutions

- The recent improvements in the asylum sector in Greece have translated into an accelerated rate for the granting of status to those in need of international protection. As such, 5,100 people were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection between January and July 2017, nearly double the 2,700 of the entire 2016.
- This translates into a pressing need to support recognized refugees transition smoothly from the assistance they received as asylum-seekers to the national programmes they are eligible for in Greece, at the same terms and conditions as Greek nationals.

- To that end, UNHCR is working with the Government to develop further the national integration policy for refugees and for people who receive subsidiary protection.

Relocation and Returns

- In July, 1,622 people relocated from Greece to other EU Member States according to the Greek Asylum Service, bringing the total to 17,454 people since the start of the programme.
- Also in July, 60 people were returned from Greece to Turkey in the framework of the E.U. – Turkey Statement. Since 20 March 2016, 1,289 people have been returned to Turkey.

Logistics

- To alleviate the overcrowded conditions in the reception and identification centres of the islands, UNHCR organizes transfers of asylum-seekers from the islands to urban accommodation in the mainland and Crete or to sites in the mainland. In July 2017 UNHCR assisted the transfer of 1,028 asylum-seekers. A total of 10,292 people have been assisted since June 2016.
- Many of the sites in the mainland are remote from services and transportation. UNHCR ensures that this does not hinder access to asylum. In July, UNHCR provided transportation to the Asylum Service and embassies for 2,679 asylum-seekers in Northern Greece and 994 in Attika.

Support to local communities

- This month UNHCR donated ultrasound and office equipment to Mytilene's General Hospital of Lesbos, thanks to funding from the European Commission's DG HOME.
- Finally, UNHCR expressed its support and extended its assistance to the community of Kos following the fatal earthquake on the island.

Partners

- In July UNHCR worked through 30 partners in 9 sectors. UNHCR worked on Protection with Arsis, GCR, KSPM-ERP, METAdrasi, Praksis, ICMC, 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, Municipality of Athens, Municipality of Andravida, Municipality of Heraklion, Municipality of Livadia, Municipality of Thessaloniki and Municipality of Trikala; 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, 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

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Thanks to the donors for the Greece operation

European Union (200 M) | Spain (2 M) | Fondation BNP Paribas (0.4 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (0.3 M)

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