

Weekly Report



Key Figures

Mediterranean

271,676

arrivals by sea in 2016*

3,167

dead/missing in 2016*

Trends of Sea Arrivals

Between 22 and 28 August, 521 refugees and migrants crossed the sea to Greece – a decrease from the 923 who crossed the previous week. However, more people arrived in August than in July 2016 (1,920 for the whole month of July; 2,810 as of 28 August). Since April, only 11,662 refugees and migrants have crossed the sea to Greece, in comparison to 225,505 in the same period in 2015. Of those arriving in Greece this year, 48% are from the Syrian Arab Republic, 25% from Afghanistan, and 15% from Iraq and children have comprised 38% of arrivals with men making up 41% and women 21%.

During the reporting period, 1,953 people arrived to Italy by sea – a decrease from the 2,055 that arrived the previous week. The number of arrivals in 2016 continues to be on par with 2015, with 105,628 arriving in the first eight months of 2016 compared to 116,149 in the same period the previous year. Of those crossing to Italy, Nigerians have comprised 20%, Eritreans 12% and Gambians 7%, with 15% of all arrivals being unaccompanied and separated children – mostly from Gambia, Egypt and Eritrea, as compared with 7% in 2015.

Key Developments

Situation in Greece

With an average daily arrival of 101 persons to the Aegean islands so far in August, Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) on all islands have surpassed official capacity and allocation of space for new arrivals is a growing challenge. The maximum capacity on the five islands remains 7,450 while the total presence on the islands was 11,690 until 28 August. Each island is addressing these challenges with support from UNHCR. Although referrals to the mainland of persons and families with specific needs continue throughout sites on the islands by UNHCR and partners, shelter capacity and registra-

tion are being impacted by the new arrivals. In Kos Island, for instance, UNHCR advocated with the Reception and Identification Service to transfer refugees with no geographical restriction (who have completed the 25 days for identification required by the Greek law) to Kalymnos Island, in order to reduce congestion at the Pyli Reception and Identification Centre. Transfers are expected to take place next week. On Chios Island, additional space has been created with the support of UNHCR and its partner Samaritan's Purse's intervention in Dipethe site, through the installation of dividers in the rub halls. The accommodation scheme through partner Arsis has also been initiated providing apartment spaces for persons with specific needs on Chios.

Alternate Minister for Migration Policy Yannis Mouzalas announced on 23 August, the closure of some accommodation facilities on the mainland, while in others the number of refugees staying there will be reduced thanks to the gradual accommodation of refugees in rented apartments and hotels through UNHCR's accommodation programme. Until 28 August, UNHCR through partners has identified a total of 10,571 accommodation places for relocation candidates and other asylum-seekers, with funding from the European Union. Minister Mouzalas further said that the government's plan to build new camps with more dignified conditions for refugees and migrants throughout the country will be completed by the end of December, referring to plans of the authorities to decongest the overcrowded existing sites on the islands by progressively transferring asylum-seekers to the mainland. In addition to UNHCR's usual protection and site management support, the organization has offered its support to the Greek authorities in order to address priority any needs and gaps.

Average Arrivals to Greece and Italy per Month January to 28 August 2016



* data.unhcr.org/mediterranean as of 30 August 2016

Key Figures

Greece

521

Total Weekly
Arrivals to
Greek Islands

22 August - 28 August

74

Daily Average
Arrivals to
Greek Islands

22 August - 28 August

Italy

1,953

Total Weekly
Arrivals to Italy

22 August - 28 August

279

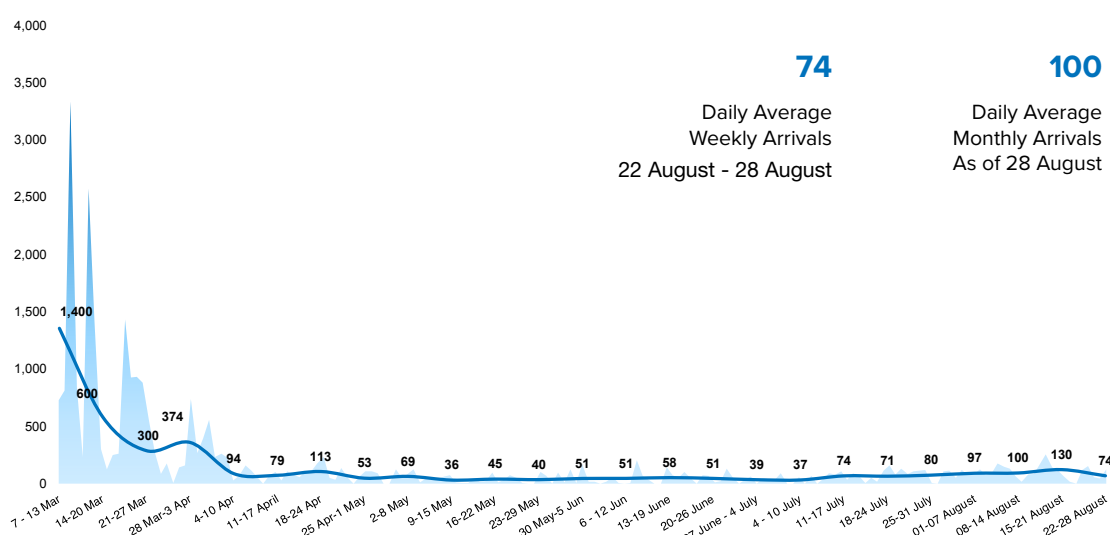
Daily Average
Arrivals to Italy

22 August - 28 August

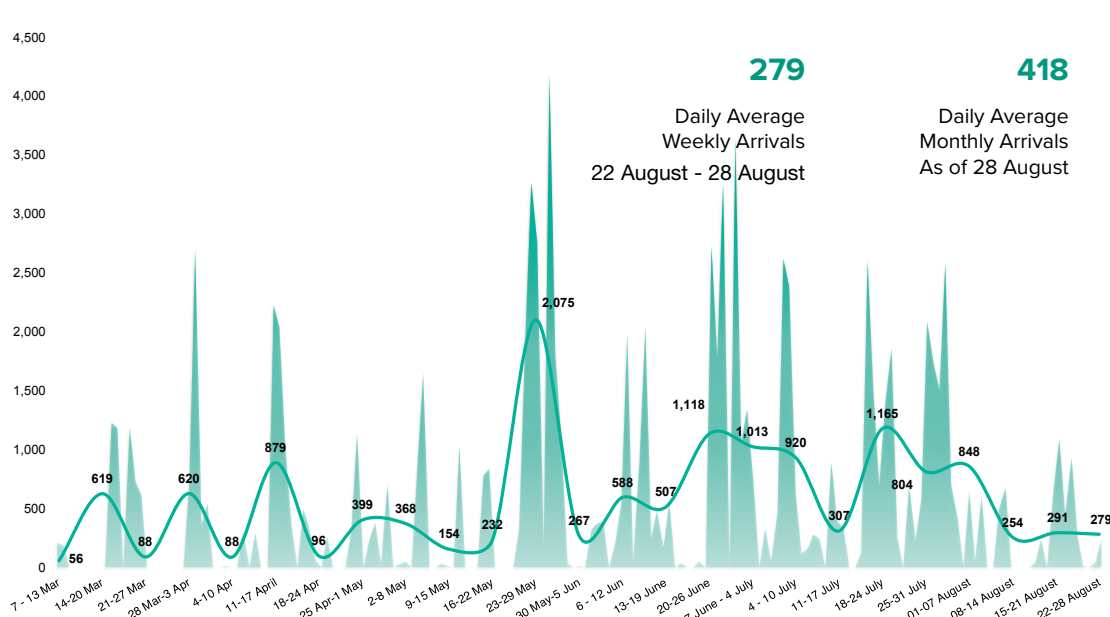
Official results from the pre-registration exercise were announced by the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) on 23 August. The exercise aimed to pre-register persons on the mainland who arrived up to 19 March. A total of 27,592 people were pre-registered, with 57% of them being men and 43% women. About 54% are from Syria, 27% from Afghanistan, 13% from Iraq. In total, there are 1,225 unaccompanied children in the camps, corresponding to 4% of the 27,592 registered. According to data presented by the Greek authorities, an additional 5,800 people had already registered earlier with the GAS through Skype and 500 were located in other pre-existing facilities, while 7,751 people are ready to be relocated to other EU countries. According to Greek Government statistics, over 2,000 refugees and migrants have registered through the voluntary repatriation program supported by IOM.

UNHCR continued to support community-based interventions, aimed at encouraging refugees' and migrants' participation in the day-to-day activities at each site, empowering them and helping to reduce the level of frustration among the population. In Lagadikia site, UNHCR is supporting the publishing of a weekly newspaper de-

Daily and Weekly Average Arrivals to Greece
07 March to 28 August 2016



Daily and Weekly Average Arrivals to Italy
07 March to 28 August 2016



veloped by refugee volunteers regarding camp life and news for the refugees. In Vagiohori site, UNHCR provided school materials for language and math classes conducted by volunteers from the local community, offered to children and adults. At the same time, distribution of core relief items continued, and in Vasilika/Redestos site a total of 600 mosquito nets were distributed by UNHCR during the reporting period.

UNHCR High Commissioner Visits Greece

The High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi, visited Greece between 24-25 August, accompanied by Mr. Vincent Cochetel, the Director of the Europe Bureau/Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Refugee Crisis in Europe and Ms. Melissa Fleming, the UNHCR Spokesperson and Head of Communications. The purpose of the mission was to assess the needs of persons of concern to UNHCR and other populations affected by the Mediterranean situation, as well as the humanitarian response and how UNHCR could further contribute to these efforts in support of the Greek authorities. The High Commissioner met with the Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and President Prokopis Pavlopoulos, as well as with the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Center for the Management of the Refugee Crisis including Alternate Minister of Migration Policy, Mr. Ioannis Mouzalas along with other high-level officials in relevant areas. In Athens, the High Commissioner visited a centre for unaccompanied and separated children run by UNHCR's partner Praksis, a family of candidates for relocation living in an apartment provided by UNHCR, and met with local and international humanitarian agencies. He also visited Lagadikia and Vasilika/Redestos sites in Northern Greece. During a press conference on 25 August, the High Commissioner praised "the people of Greece for staying on course during a refugee crisis". Additionally, he raised concerns on issues of security and protection in some of the sites, the grave protection risks forced by unaccompanied and separated children, the need to upgrade conditions in many of the sites, the importance of decongesting the islands, and the need for the acceleration of the EU relocation programme and robust integration plans. The High Commissioner will proceed on mission to Turkey on 31 August.

Concerns over Enforced Returns from Italy to Sudan

On 24 August, 48 Sudanese nationals were reportedly returned from Italy to Sudan. The removal followed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Italy and Sudan in early August. This development is of concern to UNHCR, as it entails a risk of returning people that may have protection needs in Sudan, which may not have been assessed. It remains unclear whether the MoU entails adequate safeguards against refoulement and whether authorities took in due consideration the situation in the country of origin. UNHCR is seeking to obtain further clarification on the details of the MoU and on this return operation.

Situation in Serbia and at the Serbia-Hungary Border

The numbers of refugees and migrants present in Serbia throughout the reporting period was 4,400. Of those present in the country 80% are accommodated in governmental facilities, including 1,340 throughout the five Asylum Centres and 2,216 in Refugee Aid Points (RAPs) or Reception Centres (RCs). As a result, many of these facilities are exceeding their capacities. UNHCR and partners continued providing protection assistance and monitoring, legal counselling on asylum, and support for coordination amongst authorities and humanitarian agencies.

As of 28 August, the total number of asylum-seekers in northern Serbia shrank to 708 in comparison to over 1,200 in July. The number of asylum-seekers camping on the Serbian side of the border with Hungary, close to the Hungarian transit zones, dropped below 350 from 840 last month, with the remainder accommodated in RAPs and Presevo RC. Hungarian authorities continued to admit around 30 people each day. Of those waiting entry, 63% were Afghans and 20% Syrians while on average 42% were children, 37% men, and 21% women.

On the evening of 23 August, a 20-year-old Afghan, amongst a group of six men who had entered Serbia irregularly by foot through the forest from Bulgaria, was fatally shot by a hunter near Pirot in Eastern Serbia. The alleged perpetrator presented himself to the police and an investigation into the tragic incident is ongoing. Dangerous onward movements by asylum-seekers, including with the use of smuggling networks, continues to pose grave protection concerns.

Between 22 and 28 August, Hungarian officials reported preventing the entry of 423 persons and intercepting and returning 485 persons to the border with Serbia. Following concerning reports of excessive force by border police, on 24 August Hungarian National Police chief, Károly Papp, [indicated](#) that Hungarian border patrol staff may have been guilty of brutality against migrants on the southern border. He said that "prosecutors have begun criminal proceedings in four cases." (see video link at 1:49 min). Earlier last month, UNHCR has [raised concerns](#) about reported use of excessive force and abuse by Hungarian law enforcement and border control officers following recent testimonies provided by asylum-seekers.

Update on Relocation

During the reporting period, Luxembourg (30) and Netherlands (100) pledged additional places for relocation candidates from Greece in addition to the previous 7,873 made available by EU Member States. Until 28 August, a total of 8,003 places have been pledged by 22 countries for relocation applicants in Greece, and a rapidly decreasing number of only 119 places were left open for relocation candidates, in relation to those who have al-

ready been referred for relocation. The number of actual relocations and scheduled departures remains low at 3,386 - only 5% of the 66,400 people who are supposed to be relocated from Greece by September 2017.

During the week, 51 persons were relocated to the Netherlands from Italy, bringing the total of transfers from Italy since the adoption of the relocation scheme to 1,011, 2.5% of the 39,600 target to be relocated from Italy by September 2017.

Update on Readmissions from Greece to Turkey

On 25 August, two Syrians were voluntarily re-admitted to Turkey aboard a chartered flight from Chios to Adana. Of these two cases, one individual had withdrawn their asylum application as of 20 July and the other had not applied for asylum.

The total number of readmissions to Turkey from Greece is 484 as of 28 August.

EU Developments

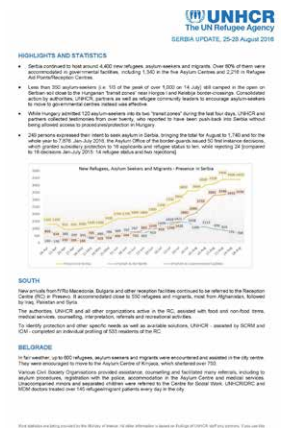
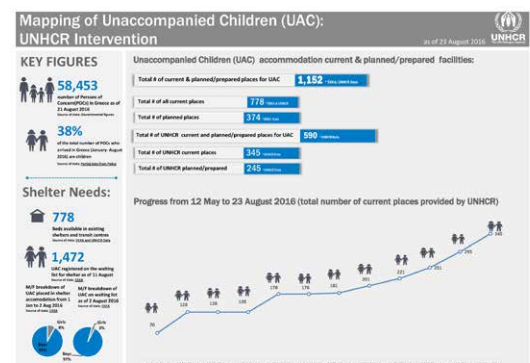
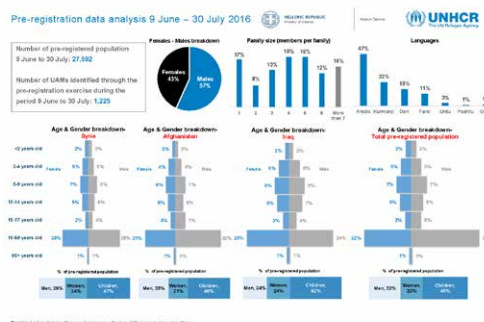
On 23 August, the agreement of [EUNAVFOR Med Op-](#)

[eration Sophia](#) and the Libyan Coast Guard [signed a Memorandum of Understanding](#) on the training of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy. To take place in coordination with EU agencies and international actors, the training program will aim at improving the security of Libyan territorial waters, enhancing the capacity of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy to perform law enforcement actions to tackle human traffickers and smugglers, and further preventing death at sea through search and rescue operations. EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia has been active in since June 2015. Its core mandate is to prevent human trafficking and smuggling in the Central Mediterranean.

On 25 August, FRONTEX released its [Risk Analysis](#) for the first quarter of 2016. The document provides a situational overview relating to irregular migration as well as a risk analysis. The latter focuses on the Western Balkan route. It concludes that flows throughout that route were lower in numbers but more fragmented, and that the new sub-routes are difficult to monitor.

Key Documents from the Portal



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