

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

13,036 accommodation places established for relocation candidates and asylum-seekers in Greece.

14,196 beneficiaries
(Cumulative number of current and past occupants, persons relocated to Member States and irregular departures and/or abandons).

9,624 places pledged by EU Member States for relocation from Greece.

7,143 persons accepted by the EU Member States for relocation from Greece.

4,563 persons left Greece to other EU countries under the relocation scheme.

488 places for unaccompanied children (UAC) established.

Highlights of September

- The accommodation capacity in support of the relocation programme funded by the European Union reached **13,036** places as of **30 September**, representing **65 per cent** of the **20,000** target of UNHCR and its partners by the end of 2016. **The monthly number of pledges made by EU Member States from Greece reached a new high of 1,618**, after a year of operation since September 2015. The monthly average for the last three months was less than 950. Currently, only Lithuania (109.5 per cent) and Ireland (105.4 per cent) achieved and exceeded their targets, while the average achievements without the two Member States mentioned remains a modest 25 per cent.
- On 1 September, the **CEO of IKEA foundation Mr. Per Heggnes** visited one of the apartments managed by partner ADDMA-Municipality of Athens. He showed great interest in the provision of education to the children during their stay in Athens, and was warmly welcomed by the relocation candidates.



© UNHCR/Won-Na Cha.



UNHCR Executive Committee Chair Ambassador Mr. Carsten Staur visited a Relocation candidate family. © UNHCR/Won-Na Cha.

- **Executive Committee Chair Ambassador Mr. Carsten Staur** with the Danish delegation, visited one of the apartments managed by partner PRAKSIS. One of the Relocation candidates (Gais, 18) himself provided the English translation to his extended family of seven.

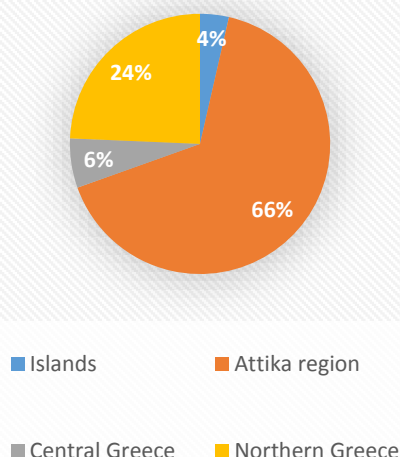


The participants showed great interest and satisfaction to the exclusive guided tour and snacks at the Cycladic Art Museum café. © UNHCR/Yorgos Kyvernitis.

- On 20 September, as part of the European Cultural Heritage Days programme, 31 beneficiaries of the Accommodation for Relocation project in two separate groups went on an excursion to the Cycladic Art Museum. An English and Arabic interpreter was present. “I only read about Greek civilization in books but today I saw the real thing” said Haya (16), one of the participants. “And I am amazed about the similarities of our histories”.

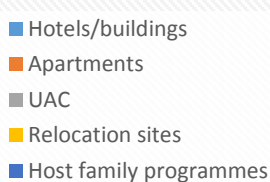
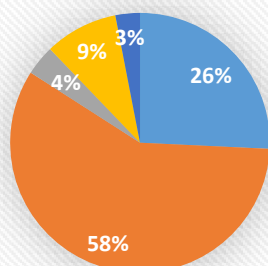
Where are they located?

As of 1 October, 2016



What are the types of Accommodation?

As of 1 October, 2016



What is Relocation?

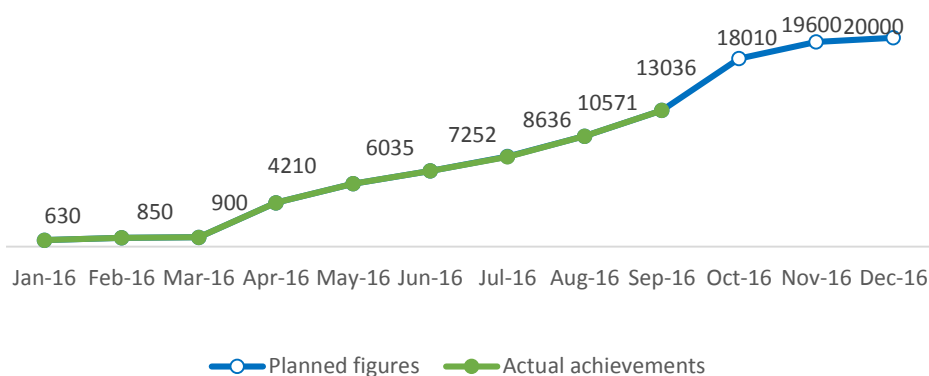
Relocation is an EU Justice and Home Affairs Council decision to transfer a total of 106,000 asylum-seekers from Greece (66,400) and Italy (39,600) to other EU Member States where their application for asylum will be processed. If their applications are successful, they will be granted refugee status with the right to reside in the respective EU Member State, where they have been relocated. The relocations should take place over two years starting from September 2015.

Partners and the planned accommodation places

Partner	Available and/or in use as of 01/10/2016	Places planned to be available by end of October
Praksis	5,740	7,200
Municipality of Athens through Athens Development and Destination Management Agency (ADDMA)	1,275*	1,500
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	69	500
Arsis	625*	700
Solidarity Now	584	958
Nostos	422*	422
Iliaktida	156	190
Municipality of Thessaloniki	86	200
Unaccompanied Children Centres(UAC)**	488	650
UNHCR through hotels/ other buildings	2,401	4,500
UNHCR through relocation sites (Lagadikia and Ioannina)	1,190	1,190
Total	13,036	18,010

(*) indicates that the current targets have been met and the increase of target is under discussion.
 (**) Centres for unaccompanied children (UAC) are implemented by partners PRAKSIS, ARSIS, NOSTOS, ILIAKTIDA, Metadrasi, Faros and Save the Children.

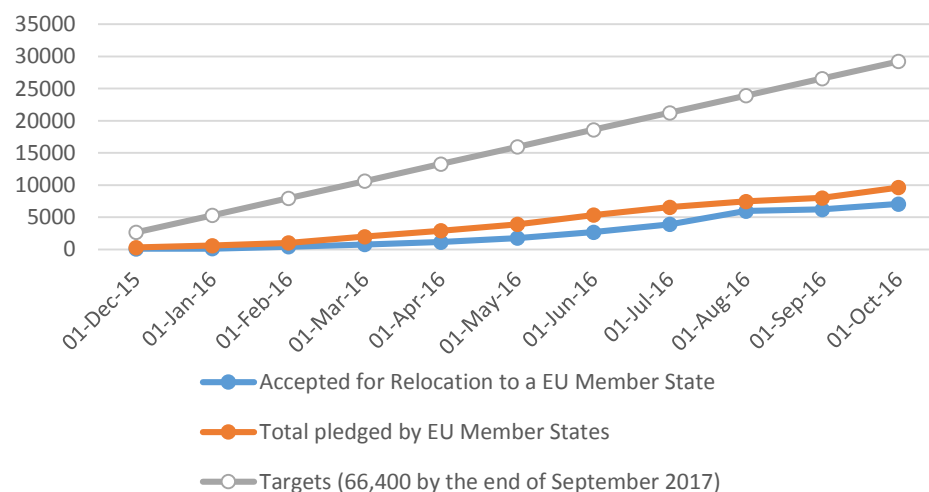
Accommodation for Relocation Project Timeline



The current state of the Relocations scheme

- September 2016 was the mid-point of the Relocation scheme which is to relocate a total of 66,400 persons from Greece by September 2017. A total of 9,624 pledges (14 per cent) have been made by the EU Member States so far. The number of persons who were actually relocated to EU Member States remains low at 4,563, which is only 64 per cent of the entire numbers accepted for Relocation.

Number of Relocation Places Pledged and Accepted Against the Total Target (September 2017)



A beneficiary's story (I): "Please accept us with open arms"



Waad (far left) sits with her new found friends who she was accommodated with in Rovies, Evia island through UNHCR's partner Solidarity Now.



(Above) Waad, her mother and brother look hopeful for the departure to Germany in the next few days. All photos above © UNHCR/ Won-Na Cha



(Left) Waad poses at the Athens airport prior to her departure to Germany. Photo provided by Waad Mohammed.

ATHENS, Greece, 2 September (UNHCR) - Waad arrived in Greece with her family in February 2016. When they first arrived, they stayed in one of the sites in Thessaloniki for three months before they could be pre-registered through Skype by the Greek Asylum Service. They were accommodated in a hotel in Rovies, Evia island, managed by partner Solidarity Now (*Fact sheet August 2016 issue, A beneficiary's story- "This desire for a home has never been stronger"*) where they lived for another two months. In August, after six whole months from arriving in Greece, the interviews with the German Embassy began. It was decided that it would be better that they stay in Athens whilst the process is being completed rather than at Rovies, hours away from the capital. Again, Waad's family moved to a hotel in central Athens, managed by the same partner of UNHCR, Solidarity Now. Once the process started, the notification from the German embassy- basically an authorization to travel, was given in two weeks. When Waad knew where her new home is likely to be in Germany, she set to action.

It has been years since she has not been in school. Eager to learn and make most of the resources available, having no books nor a teacher to teach her German did not faze her. She searched through the web and downloaded programmes – five altogether, to help her with the language and for her family to integrate in the new country as quickly as possible. It is also useful that her dad, a former truck driver, is aware of the German traffic rules, so he can continue his job in their new home. "She is already watching TV series in German", her mother proudly adds. Waad says that Germans greeting each other even if they don't know each other was a reassurance "Just like they do in Syria". She hopes that her new home will offer the same safety and comfort.

Many of her friends she made in Rovies had already left on relocation. She had to say good bye to them when they embarked for Spain and Netherlands amongst others. "It was bitter sweet. They were moving on to the future, back to normalcy. But it was also sad because it would be difficult for me to see them again. It was so fun to be together. When I heard that Germany is where we are going, we were so happy, we cried. The country is full of opportunities and we waited this for so long".

Waad is full of curiosity towards her new home and neighbors, and she is also willing to tell about her home-country. "I want them to know that Syrians are peaceful people. I know that our ways are different, but that should not be the basis of how to treat one another". Waad's mother adds "Syria was a beautiful country, but it has been through war. The country will reinvent itself through the people who have left, like us. We carry Syria in our hearts. The adjustment to another country will not be easy at first, the

difference in language, the culture, the people... But eventually we will overcome". Waad shares her relatively flexible perspective. "I want to be one with the community, but also break stereotypes – to show them that we are not terrorists".

Waad wanted to share her final words to her new neighbors. "We are coming soon- please accept us with open arms... Just like the Greeks did".

Her family left Greece and arrived in Germany on 7 September.

A beneficiary's story (II): The boys of Lesbos, their hopes and fears

LESVOS, Greece, 17 July (UNHCR) - Iliaktida runs several centres for unaccompanied children in Lesbos. This one houses nine Syrian boys. As minors, they are provided with legal support, in accordance with the Greek legislation which puts the authority of the child to the Prosecutor. Food is cooked by staff who carry out other household duties, and the boys also actively help out to take care of the common spaces. UNHCR asked four boys of their stories on what caused them to separate from their families, and what is on their minds these days.

(continues)

Mohammed

"ISIS invaded our town. There was violence everywhere and there were people coming to each households and asking for men to join the army. I was about to reach 18, which meant that I would have to be drafted too. Before the war, this would not have been a problem. However I knew very well what this meant now. I would soon kill my own people, or be killed. I didn't want to do that. I am the oldest of seven siblings and my father is old. He supported my plan to leave Syria and survive this war. I talk to him once in a while. He told me that he is happy that I left, that he is glad that I did not see what happened to our village and country".

Mustafa

"Our city was totally destroyed. My family left for Germany, but I said I didn't want to go. Despite all the challenges, I wanted to make my dreams as a chef come true, in the place where I was born. So I chose to stay with my uncle instead. However, after a few months it became clear that there was nothing more to hold on to and the city was not livable. Uncle, aunt and I journeyed through Turkey and to the border between Greece and FYROM. However, when we reached there, the authorities ordered that we separate, as we are not a direct family. I went on a hunger strike for three days so they would reverse their decision. In the end, I was separated from my uncle and aunt and was sent here to stay with my new-found friends."



From left: Mustafa and Mohammed.



From left: Karam and Delieel. All photos © UNHCR/ Won-Na Cha.

Delieel

"There have been constant bombings and shootings for months. The fragments hit my eye one day and I cannot see through my right eye since. I wanted to cure it as soon as possible but there were no doctors to treat this. I used to love studying and had a very clear dream to be a physiotherapist, like my dad. However, the schools shut and I was really frustrated with the situation. I want to have a surgery on my eye as soon as possible so I can return to be a student again."

Karam

"One day I received a call to join the forces, but I didn't want to partake in continuing the war. I knew there will be alternatives elsewhere. This was my first time travelling outside Syria. I never knew that I would be in Greece, and it's amazing to know that such a beautiful place exists. The technology, the people, the nature, everything awes me. The more I see, the more I learn. During my travels, there were some bad people who wanted to take advantage of my situation and some treated me rudely. However, I try not to dwell upon this. Another important thing I learnt here was not to show

everyone how good you are, but something more genuine, directly from the heart. I am eager to know more about the different ways of people and I am not afraid for the future. My only fear is that it may take long to see my family again."

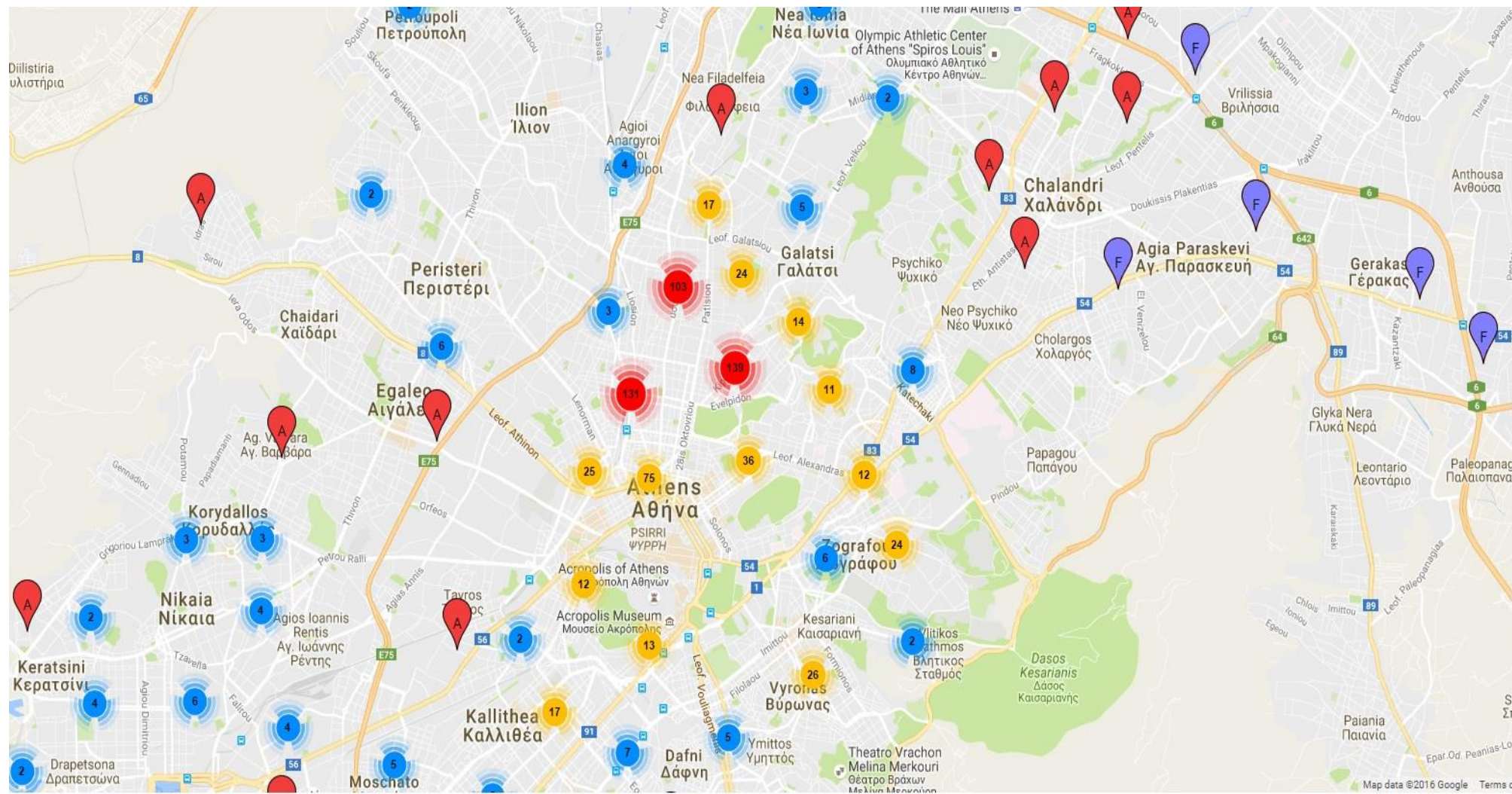
Since the interview, the boys are still waiting for their application to be processed. From October, they will start going to school, attending a class specially designated for asylum-seekers.

Highlights from the previous months

The 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 available on the UNHCR Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response URL: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>.

- **June issue** featured:
 - Main points of the EU funded project and UNHCR's Accommodation for Relocation project; Challenges and UNHCR's strategy.
 - *Saeed's long pursuit of a safe home* – A beneficiary's story.
- **July issue** featured:
 - Towards out-of-camp assistance and sustainable livelihoods-in line with the global [Policy on Alternatives to Camps](#).
 - Clarification of the eligibility criteria of Accommodation for Relocation.
 - Monthly highlights (achievements, high-level visits and country-wide pre-registration process).
 - A beneficiary's story – "*Learning from differences will make us all better people*".
- **August issue** featured:
 - Monthly highlights – Over 10,000 beneficiaries since November 2015 and pre-registration process completed.
 - Main challenges – The slow process of the EU pledges and visible agitation amongst the relocation candidates.
 - A beneficiary's story – "*It doesn't matter where we are, as long as we stay safe*"; "*This desire for a home has never been stronger*".
- **September issue** featured:
 - Monthly highlights – Over 10,000 places since 2016 and medical services initiated for the relocation candidates.
 - Main challenges – The continued slow process of the EU pledges and continued anxiety amongst the relocation candidates.
 - A beneficiary's story – "*Everyone said I was very lucky to have survived*"; "*Happiness can be found elsewhere*".
 - Progress Report: Works started on improving the living conditions in Lagadikia site.

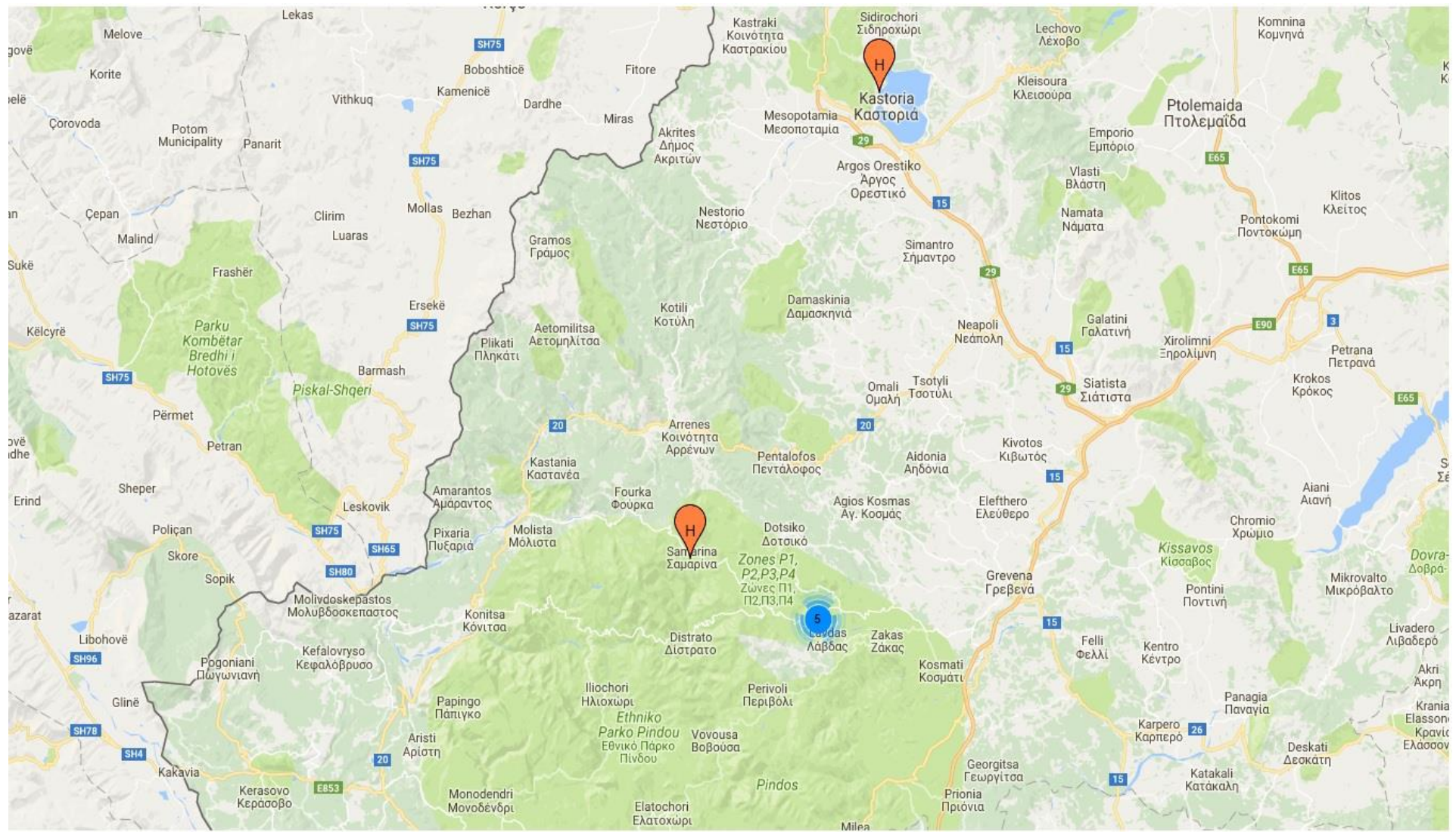
MAP OF ACCOMMODATION (I) – ATHENS



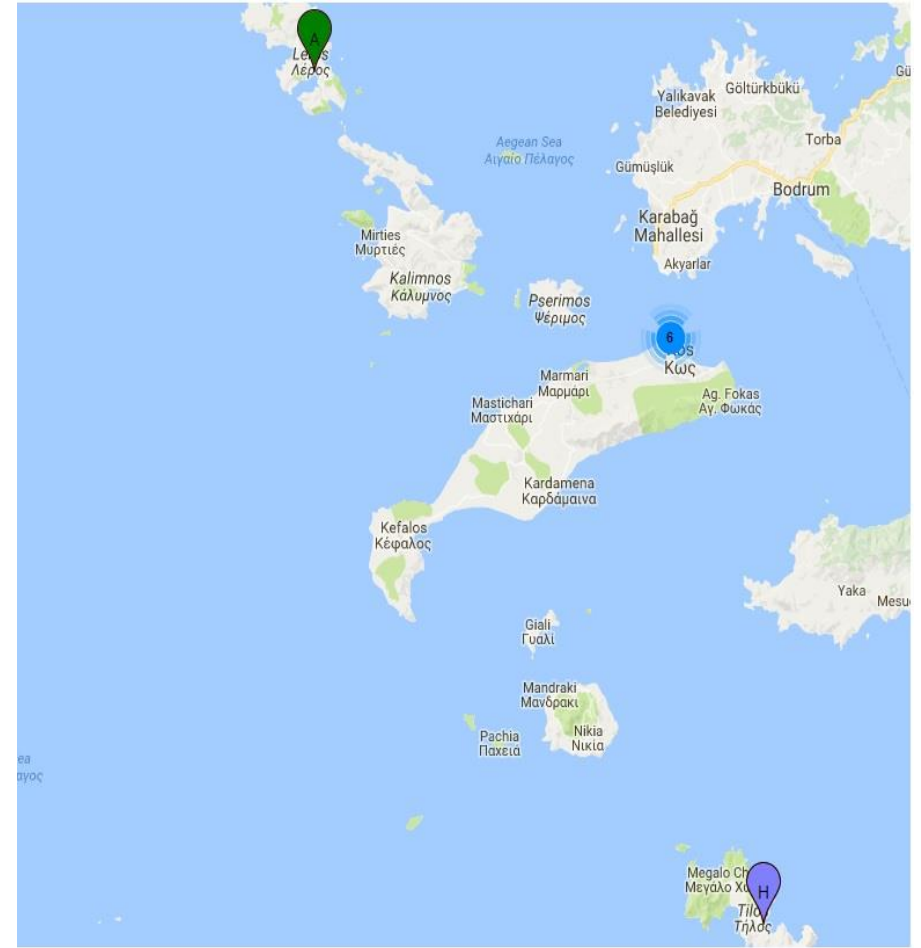
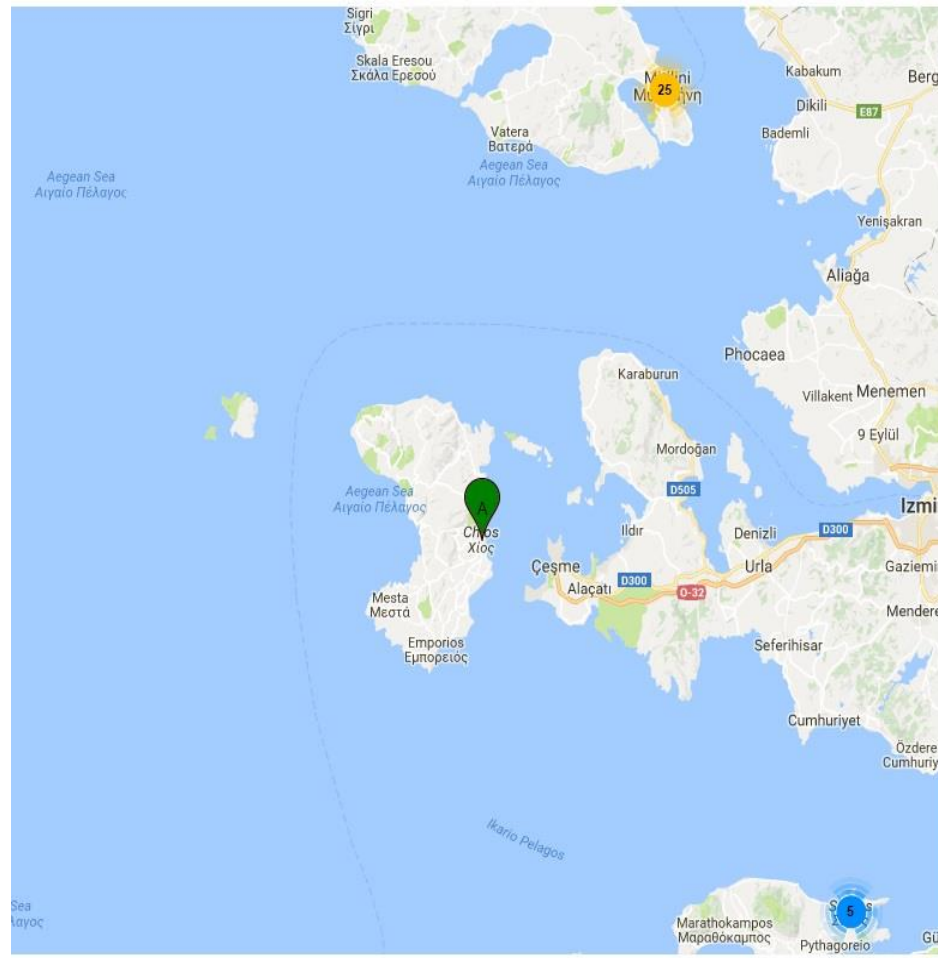
The map displays the city of Thessaloniki with its surrounding areas. The 18th bus stop is marked with a yellow dot in the center of the city, near the intersection of major roads. Other bus stops are indicated by blue dots with numbers. The city is bordered by the sea to the west and south, and various districts and neighborhoods are labeled throughout the map.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – www.unhcr.org

MAPS OF ACCOMMODATION (III) - GREVENA



MAPS OF ACCOMMODATION (IV) – NORTH AND SOUTH AEGEAN ISLANDS



MAPS OF ACCOMMODATION (V) – COUNTRY WIDE OVERVIEW

