

Accommodation update



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"I have loved wood since I was a child. I was 5 or 6 years old when I carved my first wooden horse. Since then, I have been giving shape and form to pieces of beech and walnut. But for me, it is not just a job. As I carve wood, I feel creative and free. In Crete, I work again as a carpenter and I am very happy about it".

Mehdi and his wife Roghaya, fled Afghanistan in search of safety. Together with their two sons, they made a fresh start in Heraklion, Crete, where they live in an apartment rented as part of the EU co-funded ESTIA programme. Mehdi has been working in a carpentry shop just outside the city, while twice a week the couple attends Greek lessons.

Overview

By the end of November 2020, 13,492 places were under UNHCR and 15,391 places were under the Ministry of Migration and Asylum of Greece, in the context of the agreed gradual transition of the totality of the programme to the Greek authorities. In total, 28,883 places were created as part of the programme. These were in 4,584 apartments and 20 buildings, in 15 cities and 7 islands across Greece.

The Accommodation Scheme¹ provides rented housing to vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in Greece. Urban accommodation helps restore a sense of normalcy and provides better access to services, including education and health. People are additionally supported by social workers and interpreters who help them access medical services, employment, language courses and recreational activities.

28,883

Number of accommodation places

4,604

Number of units

95.4%

Occupancy rate²

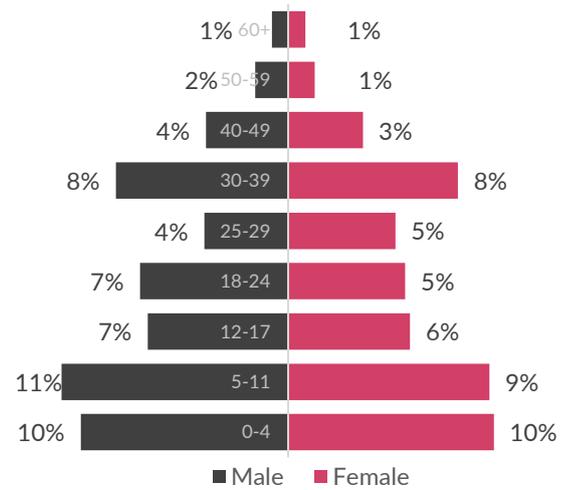
30 November 2020

¹The scheme also facilitates the eventual integration of those who will remain in Greece, while the host population benefits from the renting of their apartments. UNHCR works with NGOs as well as several municipalities around Greece to provide rented accommodation in apartments and buildings. The accommodation scheme commenced in November 2015.

²The occupancy rate is calculated as the percentage of current population over actual capacity.

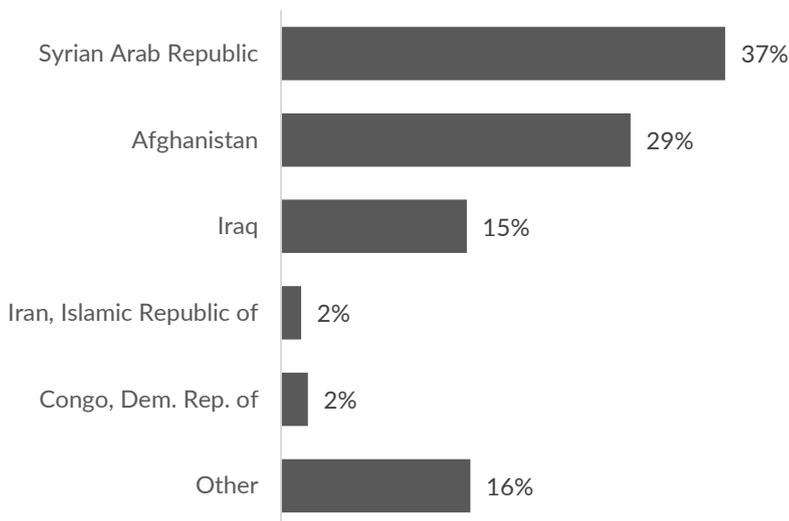
Demographics

In total, since November 2015, 72,254 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme. 21,522 people were accommodated as of the end of November 2020, 6,931 of whom are recognized refugees. 51% of the residents are children. The clear majority of those accommodated are families, with the average family size of four people. More than one in four residents have at least one of the vulnerabilities that make them eligible for the accommodation scheme. The three most common vulnerabilities are:



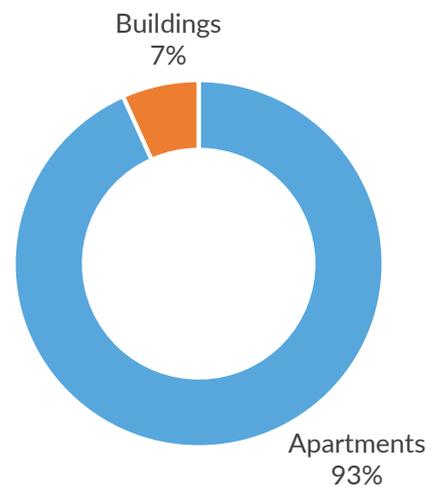
Nationalities

The clear majority, 84% of individuals in the accommodation scheme are Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians or Congolese (DRC). However, the individuals accommodated as of the end of November 2020 speak over 30 different languages as a mother tongue.



Accommodation Type

Over four in five accommodation places are in apartments, and the rest in buildings.



Partners

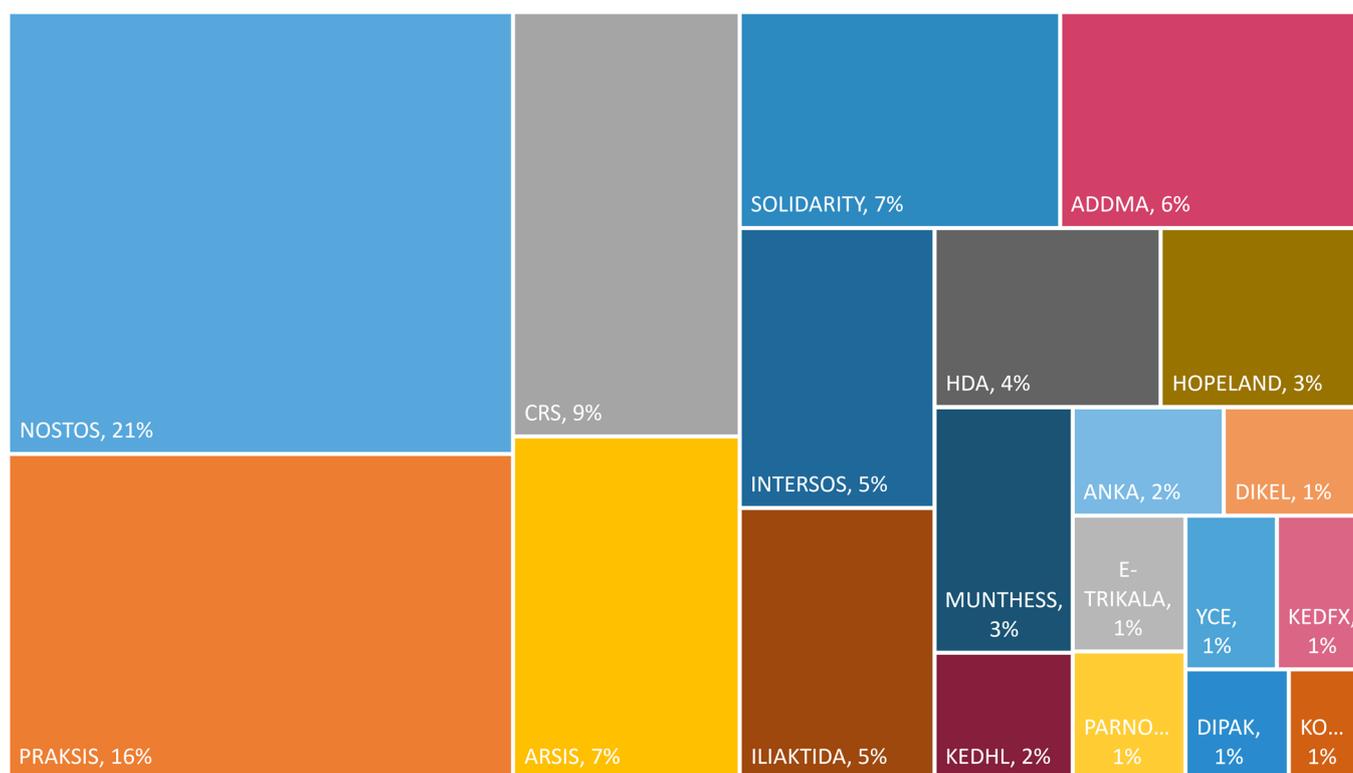
At the end of November 2020, UNHCR and MMA are implementing the accommodation scheme through 23 partnerships with 11 national and international NGOs and 12 municipalities. In total, partners managed by UNHCR provided 47% of the accommodation places in Greece and partners managed by MMA provided 53% of the accommodation places in Greece.

UNHCR partners GCR (Greek Council for Refugees) and METAdrasi provide social, legal and interpretation support. EPAPSY (Association for Regional Development and Mental Health) provides mental health services to refugees and asylum seekers with severe mental health conditions and disabilities.

UNHCR's accommodation partners are NGOs, Arsis (Thessaloniki, Samos, Kos, Leros, Rhodes), Intersos, Omnes, Perichoresis, Solidarity Now, and the municipalities of Athens (ADDMA), Thessaloniki (MUNTHESS), Trikala (E-TRIKALA), Livadia (KEDHL), Larissa (DIKEL), Nea Philadelphia - Nea Chalkidona (KEDFX), Karditsa (ANKA), Tripoli (PARNONAS), Piraeus (KODEP), Tilos (TILOS) and a consortium of municipalities in Crete (HDA).

MMA's accommodation partners are NGOs Arsis (Athens, Chios), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Hopeland, Iliaktida, Nostos and the municipality of Katerini (DIPAK).

NGO Praksis (Athens, Thessaloniki) has places under both UNHCR and MMA.



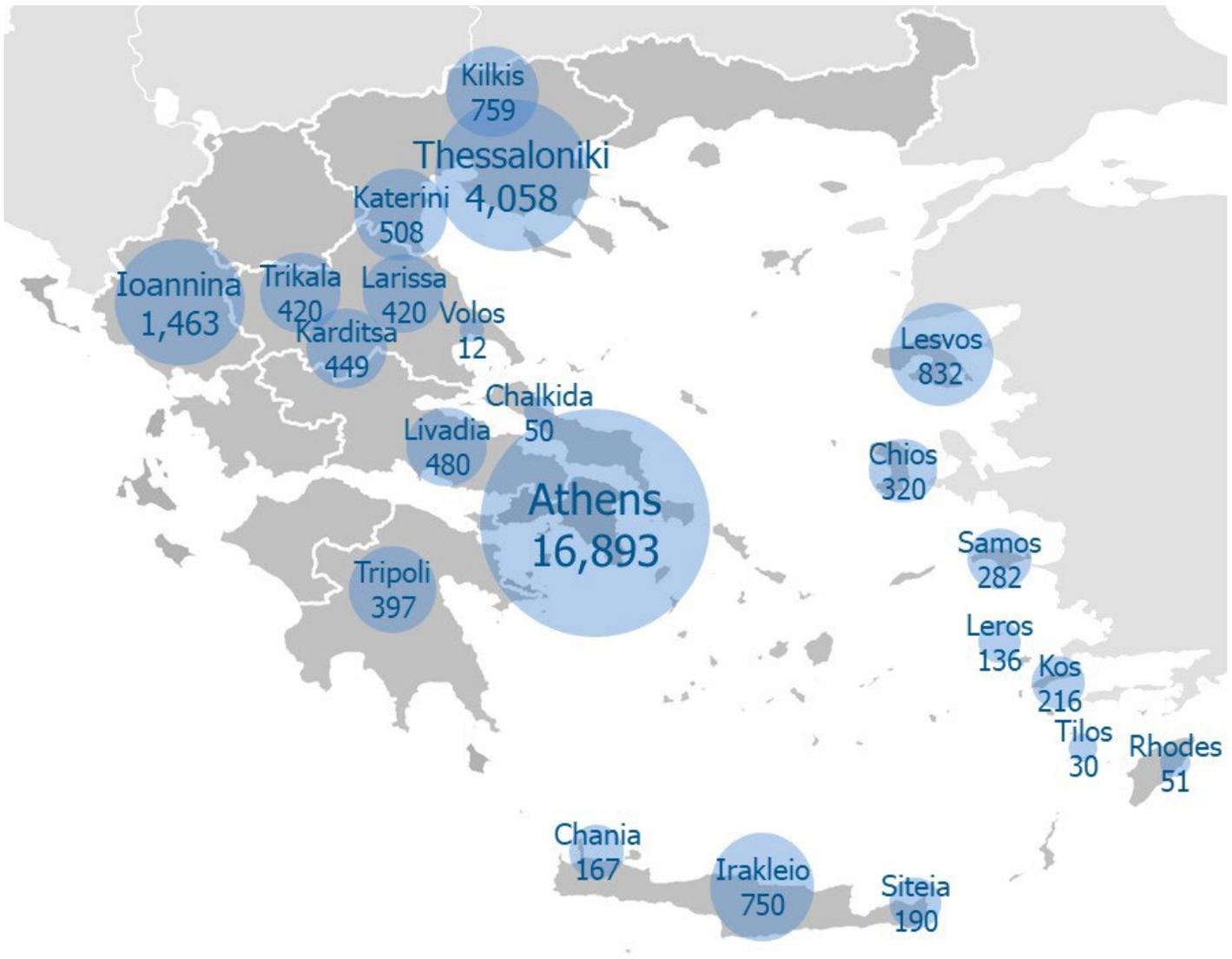
KODEP 1%, PERICHORESIS, 1%, OMNES 1%, TILOS 1%

"I reached Greece in 2015, through Lesvos island. It took me years of hardships and efforts, until in 2018 I finally managed to apply for asylum. When I came to Thessaloniki, UNHCR referred me to INTERSOS, who helped me live in an apartment. This is how I started my life here. My counselor in INTERSOS also helped me write my CV and prepare for interviews. She helped me find a job! Now I work in a construction company and I am finally happy. I feel complete again!"

Zulfiqar, 36, an asylum-seeker from Pakistan, lives in one INTERSOS Hellas apartment in Thessaloniki rented as part of the ESTIA Programme. He studies as an electrician, and since summer he has a full-time job as an electrician at a construction company.

Location of accommodation

Accommodation for asylum seekers and recognized refugees is provided in 15 cities in mainland and 7 islands. Over half, 58% of the accommodation places are in Athens, 35% in the rest of mainland, and 7% on the islands.



Total beneficiaries

In total, since November 2015, 72,254 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme.

The Accommodation Scheme is part of the ESTIA II programme, co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union.

72,254

Total number of individuals accommodated

