

EUROPE'S REFUGEE EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE #28

21 June – 18 July 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

KEY FIGURES

241,263

Refugees and migrants arriving by sea to Europe in 2016 (as of 18 July).

2,951

Refugees and migrants estimated to have died / gone missing at sea in 2016 (as of 18 July). Compared to 3,766 in 2015.

158,937

Estimated sea arrivals to Greece in 2016 (as of 18 July) compared to 856,723 total arrivals in 2015.

79,851

Estimated sea arrivals to Italy in 2016 (as of 18 July) compared to 153,842 total arrivals in 2015.

USD 380M

Total 2016 requirements for **UNHCR's** activities in the context of the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe.

USD 166M

Funding received for **UNHCR's** activities thus far in Europe in 2016.

PRIORITIES

- As of 18 July 2016 some 241,263 people crossed the Mediterranean Sea reaching Europe. During the reporting period, the trend in sea arrivals continued to decrease through the Eastern Mediterranean with approximately 1,327 people arriving to Greece contributing to 158,377 for the first half of 2016. As of 18 July, 79,851 persons have arrived by sea to Italy in 2016, compared to 93,540 at the end of July 2015.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with its partners, continues to respond to the refugee situation in Europe through a combination of advocacy, technical assistance to Governments, capacity-building, and solution-driven services to assist asylum-seekers. Since the start of this emergency, UNHCR has mobilized staff and resources in 20 different locations to provide life-saving assistance and protection.
- Throughout the reporting period, UNHCR and EASO have been providing continuous support to the Greek Asylum Service by successfully conducting a pre-registration exercise since 8 June 2016. The exercise will allow local authorities to capture information on the asylum-seeking population and get a better understanding of their needs.
- UNHCR has supported the Greek authorities' efforts to ensure protection and assistance to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) including by expanding the accommodation capacity for UASC and establishing safe spaces in temporary reception sites throughout the mainland. As of 18 July, UNHCR provided 221 accommodation places for UASC and an additional 280 are planned.
- During the reporting period in Serbia, UNHCR assisted over 1,700 individuals by referring them to appropriate asylum, medical, and reception services.
- On 5 July, new legislation entered into force in Hungary extending border control to an 8 km area into Hungarian territory. The measures have resulted in an increase in asylum-seekers awaiting admission at designated transit zones near the border facing dire conditions without adequate facilities. While the number of those awaiting admission to the two 'transit zones' in Hungary reached over 1,400 humanitarian agencies and the authorities continued providing assistance to address the consequent humanitarian, protection, and security concerns.
- Refugees and migrants who are using dangerous smuggling networks through the Balkans have reported experiencing violence and exploitation by different groups of perpetrators in the region which is of grave concern.



Pre-registration for refugees like this Syrian family in Greece to assist in accelerating solutions for them.

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OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Trends on sea arrivals

In comparison to previous weeks, Europe has experienced a gradual increase of arrivals by sea in the Central Mediterranean route during the reporting period. However, these figures remain in line with arrival trends from 2014 and 2015. In total, 70,222 people arrived to Italy by mid-2016, while recorded arrivals were 70,354 in 2015 and 63,884 in 2014 during the same period. During the reporting period, the trend in sea arrivals continued to decrease through the Eastern Mediterranean with approximately 1,327 people arriving to Greece contributing to 158,377 for the first half of 2016 in comparison to 75,204 in 2015 and 9,615 in 2014. The main nationalities among those reaching Europe by sea continue to be from some of the leading refugee producing countries including the Syrian Arab Republic (33%), Afghanistan (17%), and Iraq (11%). In Italy, there is an increase in the number of people coming from Nigeria, making up 17% when in 2015 it was 14.9%, while a reduction in the percentage of Eritrean arrivals has been noted, with 13% this year compared to 23% in 2015. Further information can be found at [UNHCR's data portal](#).

During the first half of 2016, there have been 2,896 reported dead or missing at sea which surpasses the number of those lost during the first half of 2015 which was 1,847.

Situation Overview and Response in Greece

The coordination of the response is the primary responsibility of the Alternate Minister of Migration Policy Office. As such, several line Ministries participate or chair one of the 41 sectoral working groups which are supported by UNHCR to ensure efficient coordination, both at the national and field level. Over 40 national and international NGOs are participating in 11 national level working groups, including seven governmental counterparts. Presently, UNHCR's engagement in Greece encompasses support through activities involving protection, information management, health, education, food security and nutrition, shelter and core relief logistics, site management, and community empowerment.

In response to incidents of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), UNHCR met with the Greek Reception and Identification Service (RIS) to discuss ways to strengthen the identification and support of SGBV cases in various sites, as well as strategies to put in place for SGBV prevention and response in the sites managed by the RIS. Additionally, during the reporting period meetings were held with two local organizations on how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or intersex (LGBTI) refugees could be included in the local protection network.

Conditions in many parts of the country, including in reception sites, remained difficult with soaring temperatures causing fainting and dehydration. During the reporting period, UNHCR with our partners assisted by providing 41,619 units of bottled drinking water and made referrals for those in need of medical assistance. In addition, there were reports of tensions and protests carried out by refugees and migrants. UNHCR has previously raised concerns over security in reception centres on the mainland and Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) on the Aegean Islands. As a result, increased coordination meetings on security have been taking place, and UNHCR is working with the authorities to develop joint security plans in some locations.

On 7 and 8 July, the European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Mr. Christos Stylianides, visited Alexandria, Giannitsa and Diavata sites in northern Greece. The Commissioner confirmed that a transition to cash and voucher-based assistance, on which the Greek authorities are working together with UNHCR and partners, would be a key step towards more dignified living conditions. The Commissioner also promised more efforts by ECHO in facilitating humanitarian interventions, including ambulances to benefit both the local and refugee communities. UNHCR, in close collaboration with the authorities and other humanitarian actors, will continue to strengthen efforts to engage the refugee and host communities and through implementation of community-based initiatives (CBIs) to ensure more dignified living conditions in the temporary accommodation sites.

Relocation

The European Commission (EC) released its [Fourth Report on Relocation and Resettlement](#) which concluded that increased efforts on relocation and resettlement, including under the provisions of the EU-Turkey Statement, should be sustained. By 17 July, 24 EU Member States and Switzerland had pledged places for 11,551 of the 160,000 persons to be relocated by September 2017. The applications of 3,804 persons have so far been accepted, which includes receipt of 200 new relocation pledges from Slovenia and 400 from France. Thus far, a total of 2,242 asylum-seekers (3%), against the targeted 66,400, have been relocated from Greece to other EU countries since the beginning of the relocation programme in November 2015. In the reporting period, 88 asylum-seekers were relocated from Italy to Spain (10), the Netherlands (52), Portugal (16), Croatia (4) and Latvia (6) bringing to the total to 877 of persons relocated from Italy to date out of the targeted 39,600.

Situation in Serbia and at the Serbia-Hungary Border

The situation for people awaiting admission to Hungary through the two designated transit zones at the Serbia-Hungary border has further deteriorated. On 05 July, Hungary enacted new legislation, which extended border control to an 8km area into the Hungarian territory, authorizing the police to remove people they apprehend for entering the country irregularly and escort them back to the other side of the border fence without any legal procedure. Upon removal, those wishing to seek asylum are instructed to approach one of the transit zones along the border as they are the only sites where an asylum claim can be submitted upon entry. The number of people awaiting admission at the border in Serbian territory reached over 1,400 at the end of the reporting period. Among those waiting admission, in average 42% were children, 35 % men and 23% women. The majority continue to be Afghans (65%) and Syrians (21%), followed by Iranians (8%) and Iraqi (5%). Many asylum-seekers were staying outdoors under extreme weather and living conditions near the Hungarian transit zones. Individuals and families stayed in the open or set up makeshift tents on muddy fields next to the fence. Health and sanitation presented major challenges, and hygiene conditions were far from acceptable. Some people waiting also included those with specific needs such as pregnant women, disabled persons, and unaccompanied or separated children. Meanwhile, several hundred were sheltered by the Government of Serbia in the Refugee Aid Point near Subotica, though capacities there were overstretched. UNHCR in cooperation with the Government of Serbia maintained presence and assisted people with specific needs, while providing legal counseling, and referring them to relevant partners.

UNHCR issued an official [statement](#) on 15 July about its concerns regarding the new Hungarian law, increased reports of violence, and the deterioration of the situation at the Serbia-Hungary border. In the Statement, UNHCR also expressed its willingness to support the governments of Serbia and Hungary in areas relevant to its mandate.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS

Protection, Humanitarian Assistance and Technical Support

Greece

Achievements and Impact

- The pre-registration exercise conducted by the Greek Asylum Service, with support by UNHCR and EASO, continued smoothly during the reporting period. Since the start of the pre-registration exercise, a total of 571 unaccompanied children and 471 separated children were identified and directed to UNHCR and other child protection partners whom conducted rapid Best Interest Assessments (BIA) and further referred them to appropriate services. The pre-registration in all sites in Thessaloniki and Attica area has been completed, and continued for the sites in Western and Central Greece. The exercise has also started for the refugee population living in urban settings. The first [factsheet on data collected during the pre-registration](#) (until 5 July 2016) is available at UNHCR data portal in both English and Greek.
- UNHCR supported an information campaign on pre-registration which was conducted through various NGOs and volunteer organizations, in order to provide maximum information coverage in various urban locations. As agreed with NGOs, it was decided to introduce a shuttle bus for three days to provide access to the urban caseload.

- UNHCR and partners have launched a food and cash assessment exercise in the mainland and on the islands which will form the basis of the food transition strategy under the leadership of the Alternate Minister of Migration Policy. The data drawn from this exercise, will provide a better understanding of refugees' current access to markets, financial resources and service providers, both in and out of the temporary accommodation sites. UNHCR has fully financed and logistically managed the assessment.
- A pilot scheme for communal kitchens was launched in three sites to replace food distribution by catering firms: Oreokastro in Thessaloniki, Cherso in Kilikis by Oxfam, and Doliana in Ioannina by the Norwegian Refugee Council. If successful, the model would gradually be extended to other sites in Greece.
- To support refugees' self-reliance and as agreed with the Greek authorities and Cash Working Group partners, UNHCR launched a request for proposal for financial service providers, to facilitate the establishment of a comprehensive platform for cash based assistance provision in Greece in the next months.
- UNHCR intensified its efforts in support of the authorities for expanding the reception capacity on the mainland through shelter upgrading interventions. This is a contribution to the 30,000 accommodation places to be established by the Greek authorities. Shelter upgrading interventions include, among others: the change of site plan and installation of 436 family tents in Nea Kavala; the approval by the authorities of the changed site plan proposed by UNHCR in Giannitsa, Alexandria, Katsika, and Ritsona; the progressive substitution of Army tents with UNHCR tents in certain sites; the emergency shading commenced in Skaramangas; and the finalization of the design for containers and site planning for modular camp to improve conditions for refugees in the mid-term.
- UNHCR has established 8,073 accommodation places for relocation candidates and other asylum-seekers with specific needs up to 18 July. In respect of the relocation programme, IOM assists during the pre-departure phase by conducting health assessments and organizing information and cultural orientation sessions.
- UNHCR Field Office Attica organized the first Attica level Protection Coordination Working Group, aimed at streamlining coordination among actors in temporary accommodation sites and the urban setting, focusing on participatory assessments, SGBV and child protection. 13 international and national NGOs participated in the first meeting, where the further scope and aim of the working group were discussed.
- On the Aegean Islands, UNHCR and partners continue to provide protection assistance while enhancing support to people with specific needs. On Lesbos, an SGBV response training was carried out for 40 persons mainly UNHCR staff and partners. On Chios, a new Child Friendly Space is now operational in Vial in addition to the one in Souda managed in collaboration with Save the Children and the Hellenic Red Cross. UNHCR continues to provide alternative accommodation in hotels or other shelters to over 100 individuals with specific needs, including unaccompanied children throughout the islands.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR and partners distributed throughout Greece a total of 54,333 non-food items, including hygiene kits, rubber mats, mosquito nets, and buckets to store food during the holy month of Ramadan. A total of 57,339 units of bottled water and supplementary food packages were also provided. The distribution was done in cooperation with several partners including Samaritan's Purse, IRC, DRC, MSF, Oxfam, ADRA, Intervolve, Pampeiraiki and other volunteer groups.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Persistent high temperatures and new arrivals into some of the Aegean Islands, though they remain low, exacerbated living conditions at the temporary accommodation sites on the islands, while tensions are also verified in the mainland where most of the refugee and migrant population is residing in tents exposed to the heat.
- While the pre-registration has been giving back hope to people and the possibility to legally move within the country, refugees expressed apprehension about the prospect to remain in the sites for a longer period, which increases their reservations about their future and opportunities. UNHCR and partners continue to work with the Greek authorities to improve conditions at the sites, by carrying out assessments needs monitoring of the residing population and encourage solutions including relocation, family reunification and asylum in Greece.

The Western Balkans and Hungary

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Achievements and Impact

- In the transit centre Tabanovce, efforts to improve the reception facility is ongoing. During the reporting period, new cooling systems were installed in the kitchen which was provided by UNHCR and DRC. To improve the sanitary

conditions a bio-durable septic system donated by IOM was made ready for use, its capacity is capable for around 1,500 people on the site. Additionally, solar panels with boilers were installed in preparation for new showers. UNHCR has recently provided insect repellent to residents of the centre, distribution was handled by the Red Cross.

- In Vojinjak transit centre, continued work towards site improvement was also carried out. In light of warmer weather, UNHCR along with DRC and IOM provided further resources for air-conditioners and fans to be installed within the centre. Additionally, two refrigerators have been placed in the distribution point and in the kitchen to be used for cooling drinking water. Construction of a functional laundry room for residents was completed.
- With the support of UNHCR, 35 medical cases identified by City Red Cross (CRC) received care and treatment. Of these cases, three were further referred to specialized doctors.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Construction of 28 showers (two of which are designated for persons with specific needs) in Tabanovce transit centre is ongoing, however there is a foreseeable issue with water connectivity which should supply the showers.
- Several residents of Tabanovce periodically raise complaints about the quantity and quality of food mainly claiming that the portions were too small and would prefer to receive fresh food instead of canned. During weekly coordination meetings UNHCR has raised this issue and has provided suggestions for improvement.
- UNHCR continues to advocate with the authorities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in order to be granted access to the people placed in the detention centre of Gazi Baba.

Serbia

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR and partners stepped up their assistance in referrals, prioritization, counseling and assistance to persons with specific needs and groups to the Serbian authorities to address the increased humanitarian, protection and security concerns, following the rise in number of refugees and migrants in the North of the country to over 1,400.
- The number of refugees in Belgrade throughout the reporting period increased, both in the city centre with over 500 observed on 18 July and in Krnjaca Asylum Centre where over 700 refugees were sheltered at one point during the reporting period. NGO Refugee Aid Miksaliste reported over 600 refugees and migrants approached them daily in addition to those they already supported in Belgrade city centre.
- UNHCR facilitated a number of meetings with relevant authorities, local communities, and humanitarian agencies which took place regarding coordination of aid to Krnjaca AC and Miksaliste.
- The Reception Centre in Presevo at Serbia/FYR Macedonia border, which was opened a year ago by the Minister of Labour and the UNHCR Representative, marked its first anniversary, having received and assisted around a million refugees and migrants in the first year of its operations. Presevo Reception Centre remains open providing humanitarian aid and services to those in need.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- With the increased number of refugees and migrants in Belgrade and in the North, the Government facilities such as Krnjaca AC and Subotica Refugee Aid Point (RAP) became overcrowded. To decongest the sites and offer better conditions, the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), transferred and continued referring refugees and migrants to the facilities in the West, where at the moment, over 750 people are accommodated in the three Refugee Aid Points there, as well as the Asylum Centres in Banja Koviljaca and Bogovadja.
- The sanitation/hygienic situation represented a major challenge in the two border sites outside the Hungarian transit zones, due to the high number of people present, garbage piled up quickly and portable latrines needed frequent cleaning. As an interim measure and to complement the Government efforts in improving the hygienic conditions, UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies supported the contracting of a cleaning company for both border sites.

Croatia

Achievements and Impact

- On 1 July, the first group of relocated asylum-seekers arrived to Croatia from Italy. The Minister of Interior of the interim Croatian Government welcomed the four Eritrean asylum-seekers upon their arrival. Currently, they are accommodated in Porin reception centre for asylum-seekers in Zagreb awaiting the authorities' decision on granting them international protection. UNHCR is closely monitoring the process in close collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and implementing partners.

- UNHCR arranged for the delivery of 500 bunk beds to Athens and Thessaloniki from its warehouse in Županja.
- In cooperation with the Judicial Academy of Croatia, UNHCR and its legal implementing partner, Croatian Law Centre, organized a two-day seminar for 15 judges of the Administrative Courts, in charge of second instance asylum procedures. The seminar was held on 7 and 8 July in Zagreb, focusing on international, European and national standards in refugee protection.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Access to substantial interpretation services in all centres accommodating persons of concern has remained a challenge due to limited number of available interpreters, in particular for Farsi and Kurdish languages. UNHCR is currently only able to provide limited support by ensuring the presence of its interpreters during its monitoring missions. When present UNHCR's interpreters communicate information to persons of concern and make necessary follow ups on individual cases.

Slovenia

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR continues to monitor protection cases and has recently conducted focused discussions with SGBV survivors as well as the management of the asylum home in Ljubljana. Following UNHCR engagement with the stakeholders, the Slovene Police has conducted a public session on zero tolerance for domestic violence related cases and other forms of SGBV with residents at the facility.
- During 4-6 July 2016, UNHCR and partners conducted the first age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) participatory assessment, with the Afghan and Syrian women accommodated in Logatec Accommodation Centre and UASC over the age of 15 in the Asylum Home in Ljubljana. The multi-functional team found that in general the women are satisfied with the conditions in the home.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR has observed an increase in number of domestic violence incidences. An SGBV Working group, coordinated by the Government, is active in Slovenia, where solutions are jointly sought together with UNHCR and non-governmental partners. UNHCR is reviewing the current setup to cover the topics of domestic violence in addition to other SGBV cases.
- UNHCR is observing tensions between the relocated asylum-seekers and those who lodged in-country, due to the difference in processing time when handling asylum applications. UNHCR is continuously monitoring and holding regular meetings with relevant authorities.
- UNHCR identified significant lack in provision of information to asylum seekers on the status of their individual cases. While UNHCR is monitoring the situation, it is also advocating with the relevant authorities to request timely delivery on updates on the asylum procedures.

Hungary

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR maintained daily presence in Röszke and Tompa transit zones to monitor the admission procedure and provided information to asylum-seekers about asylum procedures in Hungary at the transit zones. Meanwhile, UNHCR continued to monitor and report on the conditions in the transit zones.
- UNHCR liaised with community leaders in the waiting area in Röszke and agreed with them that separate lists will be retained for families, single women, single men and UASCs for admission to the transit zones to assist the authorities to systematize admissions while taking into account different vulnerabilities. UNHCR is following up with the Hungarian Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) on the implementation and the use of the separate lists for admissions to Röszke transit zone.
- In Roszke, Oltalom Charity Organization is providing hot meals once a day on a daily basis in the waiting area. The Hungarian Maltese Order is providing NFIs, milk and snacks twice a week at both transit zones. The Hungarian Red Cross distributed baby food, diapers, and some first aid items. OIN continued to provide daily cold packages and the pediatricians of SOS Children's village are providing health care for the growing number of children awaiting admission or upon admission to the transit zones.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Following the new border legislation which went into force on 5 July, UNHCR continues to receive reports about push-back incidents including allegations of violence and physical abuse with some of the victims allegedly being beaten, exposed to tear gas, and attacked by law enforcement canines.
- On 7 July a 10 year-old Afghan boy whose family was awaiting admission drowned in a lake nearby Röszke transit zone. Often people approach the lake to swim especially on the days with scorching heat, given the absence of sanitation facilities in the pre-transit zone where they can shower. UNHCR is coordinating with the OIN to prioritize the family for admission once they decide to return to the transit zone from Subotica Refugee Aid Point. Additionally, humanitarian agencies along with local authorities are searching for solutions to address the hygiene and sanitation conditions at both transit zones.
- On 13 July UNHCR conducted a monitoring visit to Kiskunhalas asylum-detention centre where 453 asylum-seekers were detained at the time of reporting. The visit revealed that previously identified problems remain, including lack of information on the reasons of detention and on the asylum procedures. The general frustration stems mainly from the long waiting periods to realize Dublin transfers. Moreover, access to information and communication with the outside world remains difficult as most of the computers and televisions are damaged. UNHCR is following-up with the authorities to address the identified gaps.
- On 14 July 2016, UNHCR field team conducted a monitoring mission to Kőrmend open reception camp. It was observed during the mission that the tents do not provide ample coverage from wet weather. Moreover, the presence of bugs and other insects was also problematic for residents. A few of the asylum-seekers interviewed by UNHCR requested support in moving them to other reception centres inside Hungary due to the hardship of living in tents. During the monitoring mission, UNHCR observed indications that refugees are using informal crossing points through town alongside the border or opting to use the dangerous services of smugglers.

Working in partnership

In line with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), UNHCR supports the Government's coordination efforts at central and local level in Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Turkey. In Hungary, UNHCR chairs a coordination forum including UN agencies, IGOs, NGO partners and non-state institutions. This includes the support to crisis management teams, the facilitation of general and sectoral coordination meetings. Besides cooperation with Governments, UNHCR also operates closely with the European Commission and relevant EU Agencies, including Frontex and EASO. Full list of partners is available [here](#).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2016 (RMRP), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, brings together more than 60 UN agencies and NGOs in response to the refugee and migrant crisis affecting Southern Europe and the Western Balkans. As of 15 July 2016, the RMRP is 54% funded; USD 359.5 million in earmarked contributions have been received against USD 669.9 million in total requirements.

UNHCR is appealing for USD 380.3 million under the framework of the RMRP, against which USD 166.3 million in earmarked contributions has been received (44% funded).

Detailed funding information on the RMRP (inter-agency and UNHCR-specific) is available [here](#).

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to its operations in response to the emergency response in Europe, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds.

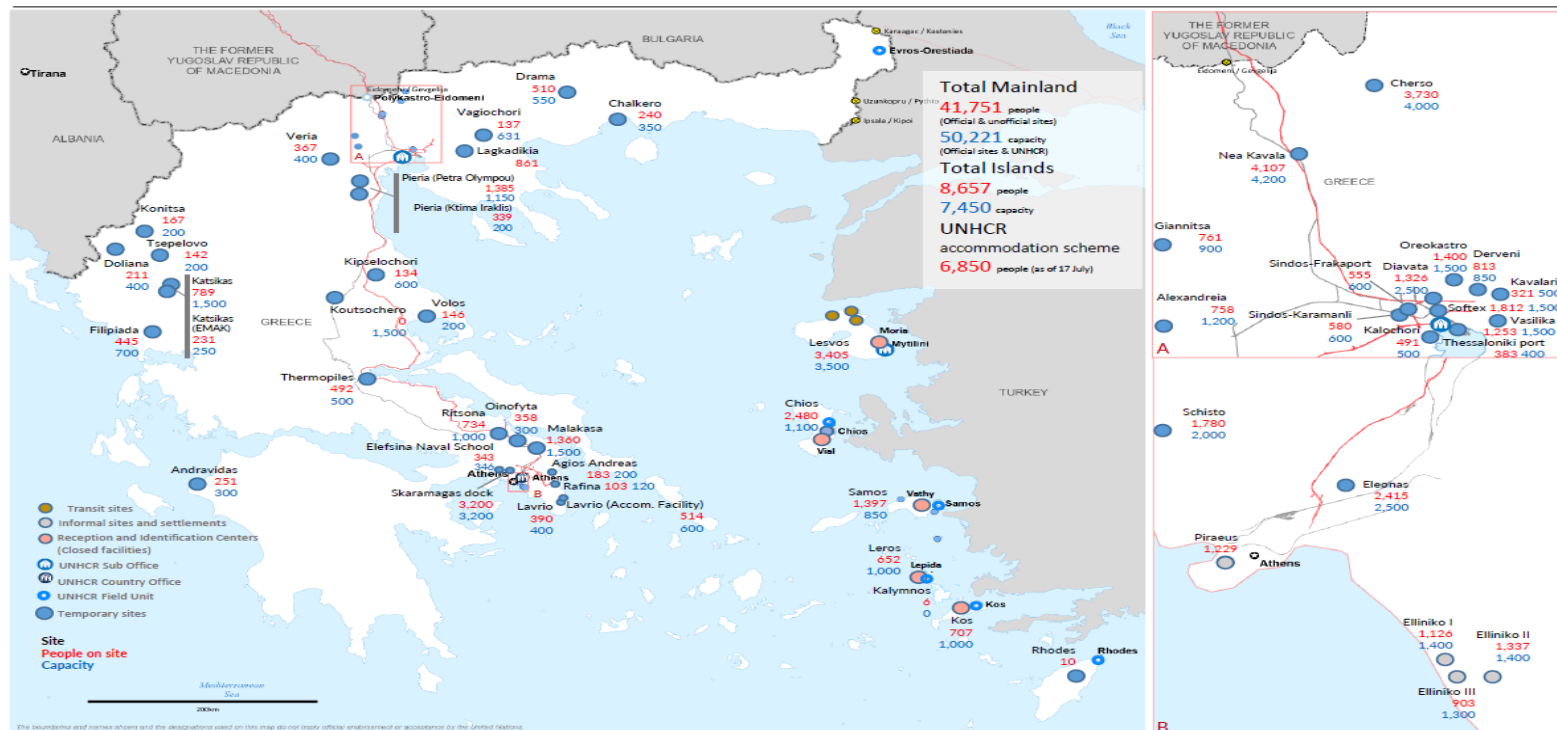
Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds to UNHCR in 2016: [Sweden \(78 M\)](#) | [United States of America \(78 M\)](#) | [Netherlands \(46 M\)](#) | [Norway \(40 M\)](#) | [Australia \(31 M\)](#) | [Private Donors in Spain \(25 M\)](#) | [Denmark \(24 M\)](#) | [Canada \(16 M\)](#) | [Switzerland \(15 M\)](#) | [France \(14 M\)](#) | [Germany \(13 M\)](#) | [Italy \(10 M\)](#)

ANNEXES

Europe Refugee Emergency

Daily map indicating capacity and occupancy (Governmental figures)

As of 18 July 2016 08:00 a.m. EET



Presence and capacity are based on Governmental figures from the Coordination Centre for the Management of the Refugee Crisis, as of 18/07/2016 08:00 a.m. Eastern European Time. Online map with additional information: <http://www.unhcr.gr/sites>

Contact: Nicolas Brass, Inter-Agency Coordinator, brass@unhcr.org

Links:

UNHCR, <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php> (webportal accessible via Google Chrome or Firefox only).