

Greece

This month **600 people reached Greece**, mostly to Lesbos island. UNHCR with IOM and UNICEF **welcomed** the latest **relocations of 49 unaccompanied** children from Greece to Portugal and Finland and

called for more. The need for such solutions is high as only **one in four has a place in a shelter**. The premature **end** of accommodation **assistance** may lead recognized refugees to become **homeless**.

More **State programmes** are necessary to help them learn Greek and find employment, while practical obstacles must be lifted to ensure they can enjoy their rights and help their **integration**.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN GREECE*

121,000

90,600 in the mainland and **30,400** on the islands

Arrivals



*UNHCR estimate as of 31 July 2020 of those who arrived and remained in Greece since the 2015 – 2016 flow.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

89,400

eligible asylum-seekers and refugees this month, and **185,600** since April 2017 received **cash assistance**.

22,100

people this month, and **68,200** since November 2015 have benefitted from UNHCR's **accommodation in apartments**.

PEOPLE IN UNHCR'S ESTIA ACCOMMODATION

70% children enrolled in schools

62% have access to healthcare (AMKA or PAAYPA)

57% have tax identification number (AFM)

22% registered with unemployment agency (OAED)

6% have a bank account

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

316 National Staff

33 International Staff

Offices:

1 Country Office in Athens

2 Sub Offices in

Thessaloniki, Lesbos

3 Field Offices in Chios,

Samos, Kos

4 Field Units in Evros,

Ioannina, Leros,

Rhodes



An Afghan family inside their apartment under UNHCR ESTIA accommodation programme in Athens.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR supports the Government of Greece which leads the refugee response, working closely with other United Nations agencies, international and national NGOs, regional and State institutions, municipalities, grassroots organizations, refugee communities and the local society.

Main Activities

COVID-19 Prevention and Response

- UNHCR [helps](#) the Greek Government's prevention and response to COVID-19 in the reception centres by increasing water and sanitation capacity, providing core relief and hygiene items, installing health units for screening and isolation, distributing additional cash assistance, facilitating information dissemination through helplines and interpreters and enhancing its coordination role with UN agencies, NGOs and authorities.
- UNHCR protects the population at high risk of COVID-19 complications in the island reception centres – where it is difficult to apply social distancing measures. Since mid-March, UNHCR has moved **1,678 people** to safer accommodation, such as hotels and ESTIA apartments.
- On the islands and in Evros, UNHCR has provided **52 medical units** for screening and isolation as well as **183 portable units** for hygiene and sanitation, including chemical toilets, showers and hand washing stations.
- UNHCR has provided over **137,600 hygiene items** such as soap and baby care kits, **40,500 core relief items**, such as blankets and sleeping bags, as well as more than **77,600 personal protective equipment** for front-line workers.
- UNHCR facilitates access to quality information for asylum-seekers via helplines, interpretation, the [HELP](#) website, [podcasts](#), [radio spots](#), [a YouTube channel](#). UNHCR also assists refugee communities offer help to residents in the island reception centres.
- UNHCR and partners running non-formal education centres ensure that classrooms are adequately equipped, distances are observed, and children can learn in a safe environment.

Accommodation and Cash Assistance

- UNHCR runs the EU-funded [ESTIA accommodation](#) and [cash assistance](#) programmes in cooperation with the Government, municipalities and NGOs. UNHCR works closely with staff from State agencies for the transition of these programmes to the Greek authorities.
- Apartments in cities and towns offer asylum-seekers and refugees greater dignity and independence. The host population also benefits from the **4,650 apartments and**

eight buildings that the programme rents in **21 cities and towns** across Greece. UNHCR had **25,800 accommodation places** this month.

- UNHCR gave cash in the form of pre-paid cards to **89,400 asylum-seekers and refugees** in apartments and sites. In July, **8.9 million euro** in cash assistance will eventually be re-injected into the local economy.

Protection

- Cessation of assistance without effective access to employment and social welfare raises the risk of recognized refugees becoming destitute. This month, Victoria square in central Athens continued to receive many recognized refugees, mostly from Lesbos. UNHCR has been [calling](#) on Greece to ensure that refugees have access to critical national programmes which promote their self-reliance and integration, including language classes, vocational training, and access to gainful employment.
- The population in the reception centres further dropped to **25,500 people**, but the centres remain overly crowded with few specialized services. Fatal and other aggressive incidents took place this month, underscoring the insecure conditions in refugee reception centres. The relationship between refugee and local communities has become more rigid with a growing number of xenophobic incidents reported.
- UNHCR's team at the land border in Evros, helps those arriving at the Fylakio reception centre, such as families and unaccompanied children, to access necessary services, provides information and helps the authorities identify those with specific needs who require special assistance.
- UNHCR helps strengthen the national system and expertise by seconding **68 experts** to the various State agencies to bolster their response and by organizing trainings for Governmental staff.
- UNHCR supports the Asylum Service with experts who advise the caseworkers upon request on how to conduct interviews, draft decisions on asylum applications and provide on-the-job training. UNHCR assisted in **7,848 instances in 2020, and 55,979 since 2016**. This work has multiplying benefits beyond these instances promoting high quality in asylum processing and ensuring the integrity of the procedure.
- From the beginning of 2020, UNHCR and its partners have helped over **6,700 asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection** with counselling and legal representation in order to prepare and support their cases, as for example for family reunification procedures.
- UNHCR [HELP website](#) answers questions in seven languages on [how to apply for asylum](#), on [rights and obligations](#), and on available services when [living in Greece](#).

Child Protection

- With close to **4,600 children** alone in Greece, only **one in four** has a place in an appropriate shelter ([EKKA data](#) as of July). As a result, their well-being and safety are at-risk, especially on the islands where living conditions are trying.
- UNHCR identifies vulnerable children and supports them with legal aid and psychosocial support through partners, and boosts the response of the Government with expertise, trainings and advice.

- Since January 2020, UNHCR's partner METAdrasi has safely moved **337 unaccompanied children** from reception centres to temporary shelters on the mainland.
- UNHCR provides places in [semi-independent living apartments](#) for **44 unaccompanied children** over 16 years old, mentoring and empowering them to become self-reliant and to live on their own. For younger children, UNHCR works with foster families to cater to the needs of **45 unaccompanied or separated children**.

Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence

- Lack of privacy, inadequate lighting and long distance to toilets and showers foster risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the sites.
- UNHCR and its partners work to prevent and respond to SGBV in urban areas as well as some field locations and islands to identify [survivors](#), including men and LGBTI persons, as well as people at-risk, offering case management, legal information, counselling, psychosocial and medical attention through partners. UNHCR refers those affected to State services and shelters or accommodation in apartments where they can get expert help.
- The pandemic and containment measures further foment the risk of SGBV and UNHCR piloted – through its partner – an online help desk to provide easier and instant assistance and information on the available services.
- UNHCR supports the authorities strengthen the national reporting mechanism on trafficking, especially on the islands where the situation is more challenging.

Education

- UNHCR with UNICEF and other actors support the [Ministry of Education](#) to include refugee boys and girls in public education.
- In the current school year, **79% of recognized refugee children in ESTIA** accommodation are enrolled into public schools alongside their Greek peers. UNHCR estimates that **7,300 school-aged children** (4-17) are on the Aegean islands, while only a handful attend public schools.
- This month, the drawing of 16-year-old Nesime from Afghanistan living in Greece was [turned into animation](#) as part of UNHCR's first-ever Youth with Refugees Art Contest which gathered over 2,000 participants from 100 countries. Another [three drawings](#) from Greece were among the totally 20 special mentions awarded.

Health

- UNHCR works with the [Ministry of Health](#), the [National Public Health Organization](#) (EODY) and partners to help refugees and asylum-seekers gain entry into the health care system, also in coordination with the [World Health Organization](#).
- Medical treatment and essential medication are scant for many asylum-seekers mainly due to the limited capacity of EODY staff and the pending issuance of the temporary health number (PAAYPA) which, in principle, allows asylum-seekers to obtain free healthcare.
- UNHCR supports primary healthcare and psychosocial support services in Lesbos and mental health services in Attika and Thessaloniki. UNHCR works with experts to

train and build the skills of non-specialist refugees to offer basic psychosocial support and empower vulnerable refugees, including those with mental health conditions.

Durable Solutions

- Since 2013, **54,300** people acquired **refugee or subsidiary protection** in Greece ([Asylum Service](#) data as of February). In July, **5,800 recognised** refugees benefitted from cash assistance and **5,900 beneficiaries of international protection** were accommodated in UNHCR's apartments.
- UNHCR's partners support those living in the accommodation scheme with job matching or referral to develop skills, vocational trainings and language courses. Of the recognised refugees living in UNHCR's accommodation, **87% have an AMKA social security number, 75% have an AFM tax number, and 35%** are registered with **OAED unemployment agency**. However, only **11% have a bank account** which is a prerequisite for receiving a salary, among other.
- UNHCR also helps refugees navigate the Greek civil, social and economic system and obtain much needed documents, such as travel papers and family certificates. These are necessary for refugees to find gainful employment and eventually be included in the Greek society. More language classes and job trainings for adults can accelerate refugees' integration.

Returns and Relocation

- UNHCR supports the Greek Government in its efforts to secure relocation places for unaccompanied children, as well as asylum-seekers and recognised refugees more broadly to other European States and offers advice and technical support.
- This month, **49 unaccompanied asylum-seeking and migrant children** were [relocated](#) from Greece to Portugal and Finland. To date, 11 European Union Member States are participating in the scheme with **158 children** relocated so far. Additionally, **173 asylum-seekers** have relocated to Germany, which includes children with serious medical conditions along with their families.
- UNHCR and its partners, in coordination with IOM, UNICEF and EASO, supported the authorities in the identification and selection of children according to their best interests as well as with their transportation to the mainland for their eventual departure.
- This month, **no people** were returned from Greece to Turkey in the framework of the E.U. - Turkey Statement, with a total of **2,140 people** [returned](#) since 20 March 2016.

Shelter and Basic Assistance

- UNHCR with partners is managing – in coordination with the Municipality of Lesvos – the Kara Tepe accommodation site which provides quality accommodation and protection to almost **1,000 vulnerable people or families**.

Partners

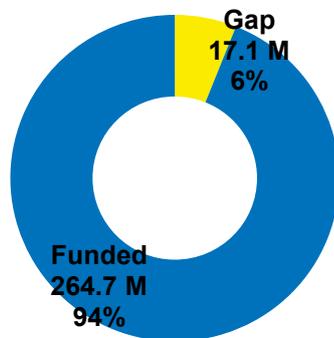
In July, UNHCR worked through **33 partners**: [UNICEF](#), [ARSIS](#), [Iliaktida](#), [INTERSOS](#), [NOSTOS](#), [Praxis](#), [Solidarity Now](#), [Catholic Relief Services](#), [the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#), [METAdrasi](#), [the Greek Council for Refugees](#), [the Network for Children's Rights](#), [Doctors of the World](#), [the Association for Regional Development and Mental Health \(EPAPSY\)](#), [Diotima](#), [Faros](#), [International Rescue Committee](#), [International Catholic Migration Commission \(ICMC\)](#), [Hellenic Theatre/Drama & Education Network \(TENet\)](#), [UNOPS](#), [Perichoresis](#), [OMNES](#) and the Local Authorities of Athens, Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Livadia, Herakleion, Trikala, Nea Filadelfia – Nea Chalkidona, Karditsa, Larissa, Tripoli and Tilos.

LINKS

[Mediterranean Situation](#) – [UNHCR Greece](#) – [Twitter](#) – [Facebook](#) - [YouTube](#)

FUNDING (AS OF 18 AUGUST 2020)

USD 281.8 M requested for the Greece Operation



Donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted funds in 2020

Sweden 76.4 M | Private donors Spain 45.9 M | Norway 41.4 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | United Kingdom 31.7 M | Germany 25.9 M | Private donors Republic of Korea 23.9 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Private donors Japan 15.2 M | France 14 M | Private donors Italy 10.8 M | Italy 10.6 M

Thanks to other donors of unrestricted funds in 2020

Australia | Austria | Belgium | Bulgaria | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Ireland | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | South Africa | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donor

Thanks to major donors of situational, thematic, regional, sub-regional funds 2020

Germany 61.6 M | United States of America 34.3 M | United Kingdom 24.8 M | Denmark 14.6 M | Canada 8.7 M | Private donors USA 7.4 M | Private donors Australia 5.6 M | Private donors Japan 4.1 M | Spain 3.4 M | Ireland 3.3 M | Private donors Germany 3.1 M | Sweden 3 M | Private donors United Kingdom 2.2 million | France | Iceland | Jersey | Liechtenstein | Morocco | Norway | Private donors

Thanks to the donors of the Greece Operation in 2020

European Union 260 M (incl. firm projections) | United States of America 4.4 M | Education Cannot Wait 1.4 M | Austria 1.1 M | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 840 K | Switzerland 734 K (firm projection) | European Economic Area 609 K | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe 546 | Deutsche Postcode Lotterie 326 K | Liechtenstein Flüchtlingshilfe 135 K | The World We Want Foundation 125 K | Laboratorios Viñas 108 K | Norway 105 K

CONTACTS

Eleni Biza, Associate Reporting Officer, Greece

biza@unhcr.org, Tel: +30 216 200 7809, Cell: +30 695 558 5567

Elena Marda, Liaison Associate, Greece

marda@unhcr.org, Tel: +30 216 200 7855, Cell: +30 695 18 01 242

Michail Agorastakis, Information Management Associate, Greece

agorasta@unhcr.org, Tel: +30 216 200 7946, Cell: +30 695 1941546