



Refugees in Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

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Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

▶ Nationality of newcomers in 2017

- Syria: 38,7%
- Iraq: 16%
- Afghanistan: 6%
- Iran: 4,5%
- Pakistan: 1,4%
- Others: 32,8%

In 2016: 86% from Syria (47%)/ Afghanistan (24%)/ Iraq (15%)

▶ Age/Sex

-2017: 30.3% children, 17.7% women and 52% men

-2016: 36.8% children, 21.1% women and 42.1% men



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Main developments since 2016

▶ **the closure of the Balkan Route**

- More than 50,000 ind. have been trapped in the Greek territory
- huge increase of asylum requests

▶ **the adoption of the EU-Turkey Statement**

- newcomers trapped on the islands
 - reforms on the asylum system
 - detention policy changes
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Reception on the islands

- ▶ There is consistently a glaring discrepancy between the number of the available places and the number of asylum seekers with geographical restriction, e.g. as of 17 June 2018, 17352 applicants on the islands compared to a number of 8130 available places.
- ▶ Many people are sleeping in tents exposed to weather conditions, food and water supply is reportedly insufficient, sanitation is poor and security highly problematic. The mental health of the applicants on the islands is reported aggravating.
- ▶ GCR had successfully filed an annulment of the administrative decision imposing geographical restrictions on asylum seekers applying for protection on the Greek Islands before the Greek Council of State. Inter alia, the Council of State found that restriction on the movement of applicants for international protection entails as a consequence their unequal concentration in only certain regions of the territory and, as a result, a substantial burden on and the degradation of those regions compared to others. However 3 days after the issue of the Council of State decision, a new decision of the Asylum Service reinstated the imposition of the geographical restrictions. An application for annulment against this decision has also been filed by GCR in mid-June 2018, and the case is still pending before the Council of State.

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Reception in the mainland

- ▶ The vast majority of the camps are located outside urban areas, remote from services and access to public transport, thereby generating a feeling of exclusion. Violence incidents, lack of security in a number of camps, and limitations in appropriate services in order to respond to the needs of the residents, are also reported.
- ▶ The vast majority of sites on the mainland operate without official site management. As a result, there is no competent authority for the monitoring or evaluation of these facilities or any competent body in place for oversight.
- ▶ The lack of official camp management, the withdrawal of civil society and the recent rise in arrivals from Evros is aggravating the situation.
- ▶ In 2017, only 35.2% of the requested for accommodation in an place under the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA) scheme – the official referral mechanism- have been accepted, while the rate for single adults without any identified vulnerability was significantly lower (10.7%). Moreover, the high occupancy rate of the UNHCR accommodation scheme coupled with the length of the asylum procedures may entail a limited capacity to satisfy new requests.

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Asylum procedure

- ▶ Access on the mainland: issue of concern (for the majority of the population only after appointment via Skype).
- ▶ Right of effective remedy: Amendment of Appeals Committees following EU pressure re. composition (TK STC).

- Recognition rate 2017:

Refugee status: 1.84%

Subsidiary protection: 0.99%

Referral for humanitarian status: 3.54%

Old Appeals Committees: 15, 9% (2015)

EU average: 17%

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Detention

- Since the EU-TK Deal: significantly increase of number of detainees. In November 2015, the number of administratively detained third-country nationals in pre-removal facilities was reported at 504. In January 2017, a number of about 2000 persons were detained at the mainland pre-removal centres. The number of persons who remained in pre-removal detention facilities was 2,213 at the end of 2017. Of those, 1,771 were asylum seekers.
- Police stations: still used for prolonged detention (Mainland/islands).
- Islands: everybody de facto detained during RIS' procedures.
- Islands: Certain nationalities remain detained after RIS procedures.
- UAMs under detention (mainland/ islands).
- Detention conditions: poor and alarming.
- Vulnerable ind. under detention.
- Kos: pre-removal center- more to follow.



Asylum Information Database, *Country Report Greece*,

<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece>

