

# GCR- Permanent presence

- Athens
- Thessaloniki
- Orestiada/Alexandroupoli
- Rhodes
- Lesvos
- Chios
- Samos
- Leros
- Kos
- Ioannina

# GCR- Regular Mission to

- **Open door policy**

- **Camps** around

Attika

Thessaloniki

Ioannina

- **Pre-removal Detention Centers** and **police stations**

Around Attika

Thessaloniki

Corinth

Xanthi

Drama

Ioannina

# GCR activities- Strategic Level

## **Advocacy and promotion of refugee rights by:**

- ▶ Participating in high level working groups, legal committees and networks;
- ▶ Implementing training seminars for the police, local administrative authorities, prosecutors and judges;
- ▶ Organizing regularly conferences, workshops (indicatively: on the implementation of alternative detention measures, rehabilitation of victims of torture, etc.) and also participating in similar events held by other organizations;
- ▶ Submitting observations to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the MSS case against Greece and Belgium;
- ▶ Reporting regularly on the situation in the refugee field {e.g. AIDA report, Asylum Information Database (AIDA) funded by the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM), a collaborative initiative of the Network of European Foundations};
- ▶ Submitting appeals and observations before the European Court of Human Rights. Indicatively: Farmakonisi case, Manolada case);
- ▶ Intervening before the Greek and European Authorities (e.g. Greek Parliament, European Parliament e.t.c.);
- ▶ Providing input on draft laws under public consultation;
- ▶ Supporting strategic cases before the Greek Courts.

# GCR activities- Operational Level Legal Department

- ▶ Information on asylum procedure and legal status
- ▶ Access to the asylum procedure (vulnerable ind.)
- ▶ Appeals against first instance negative decisions before the committees
- ▶ Representation before first and second instance asylum authorities
- ▶ Appeals against second instance negative decisions and also against deportation before the administrative courts
- ▶ Representation before civil, criminal and administrative courts
- ▶ Appeals and representation before the European Court for Human Rights
- ▶ Challenge detention before the administrative courts
- ▶ Family reunification/ Relocation
- ▶ Interventions before the authorities
- ▶ Access to social rights

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

- ▶ 50,000 third country nationals remain in Greece by the end of January 2018.
- ▶ 36,340 first instance asylum applications and 7,481 appeals were pending as of 31 December 2017.
- ▶ 10,354 persons have been granted international protection in 2017.

## ▶ **Decrease of Sea Arrivals**

-**2015:** 856,723

-**2016:** 173,450

-**2017:** 6,121

## ▶ **Increase of Land Arrivals (Evros Region)**

-exempted by the EU- Turkey Statement

-the majority remain undetected

# 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

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## 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
- relocation: not an option for newcomers

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## Asylum procedure

### A. Access to the procedure

- Mainland: issue of concern (for the majority of the population only after appointment via Skype)
- Detention: registration might be delayed where there is not an asylum office in the detention premises
- Islands: registration and examination take place few days after arrival (even before the RIS' procedures are concluded/ no time for vulnerability assessment, accessing legal aid, get prepared for interview, gather supporting documents)



# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## Asylum procedure

### B. Fast track procedure on the islands

- Examination: within 15 days
- Interviews might be conducted by EASO, who issue an opinion
- All decision concerning Syrians are rejected under the STC/FCA concepts
- Those rejected cannot participate in AVRRE programs if they appeal
- Depending on the nationality different procedure is followed
- Vulnerability assessment problematic

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## Asylum procedure

### C. Second instance

- Amendment following EU pressure re. composition

- Recognition rate:

July-end 2016: 0,4%

Jan.2017-Dec.2017:

Refugee status: 80 1.22%

Subsidiary protection: 43 0.66%

Referral for humanitarian status: 154 2.36%

Old Appeals Committees: 15, 9% (2015)

EU average: 17%

1<sup>st</sup> degree: 29,1% (2016)

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## Reception in the mainland

- ▶ More than 2 years since people became stranded on the mainland, a number of these camps are still in use, despite the fact that they are not suitable for long-term accommodation.
- ▶ In May 2017 the Ministry for Migration has announced that by the end of 2017- beginning of of 2018 the number of camps would be about 22 out of 44 camps operating at that time on the mainland.
- ▶ As it comes from the data as of 1 August 2017, at that time 32 camps were still operating. No updated data are available.
- ▶ The total number of the persons accepted to an accommodation place under the EKKA scheme in 2017 was 35,17% \*.

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## Reception on the islands

- ▶ As of 31 January 2018, a total 12,609 newly arrived were remaining on the Eastern Aegean islands, out of which 301 detained.
- ▶ Nominal capacity of reception facilities, including RICs and other facilities, 7,876 places. Nominal capacity of the RICs facilities (hotspots) 6246 while a number of 9902 was residing there, under a geographical limitation measure.
- ▶ By the end of 2017, the investigation into the death of three men who died in January 2017 within one week have not been concluded. The deaths were suspected to be linked to carbon monoxide poisoning from makeshift heating devices that refugees have been using to warm their freezing tents. Greek Court have found that the conditions on the islands directly affect the person's integrity and health.
- ▶ In February 2017, in a case supported by GCR, the First Instance Penal Court of Thessaloniki ruled that the accused persons, who had left Leros Island despite the geographical limitation and their obligation to remain there should be pronounced innocents. According to the Court, their act to leave Leros Island and consequently to violate the geographic limitation was committed in order to safeguard their personal health and integrity and thus the conditions of a state of emergency (Art. 25 Greek Penal Code) were met. In February 2018, the Administrative Court of Peireus (First Instance) in a case concerning the infringement of the geographical limitation of the applicant on the island of Lesbos and the obligation to reside on the Moria hotspot, ruled that the infringement of the geographical limitation is due to a threat against the physical integrity of the applicant because of the conditions prevailing at the time of his stay in the hotspot.

# Greece: Current Situation & Challenges

## 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>