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KEY FIGURES

758,596 sea
arrivals (Jan – Dec
9, 2015)

94,024 rescued
at sea borders
by Hellenic Coast
Guard

20,000 people
to receive rent
subsidies

20,000 new
reception centers'
capacity in Attica
and northern
Greece

1 billion euros: the
cost for Greece up
to now

GREECE: DEALING WITH THE REFUGEE CRISIS



SOURCE: UNHCR

Greece: The refugee & migrant crisis in numbers*

- 758,596 sea arrivals (Jan – Dec 9, 2015)
- 3,283 arrivals through the Evros land border (Jan – Sep 2015)
- 66,400 refugees to be relocated from Greece to other EU countries
- Top nationalities of arrivals (Jan – Oct 2015): 70% from Syria, 19% from Afghanistan, 5% from Iraq
- 94,024 rescued at sea borders
- 206 dead at sea
- 413 smugglers arrested by the Hellenic Coast Guard (Jan – Nov. 23, 2015)

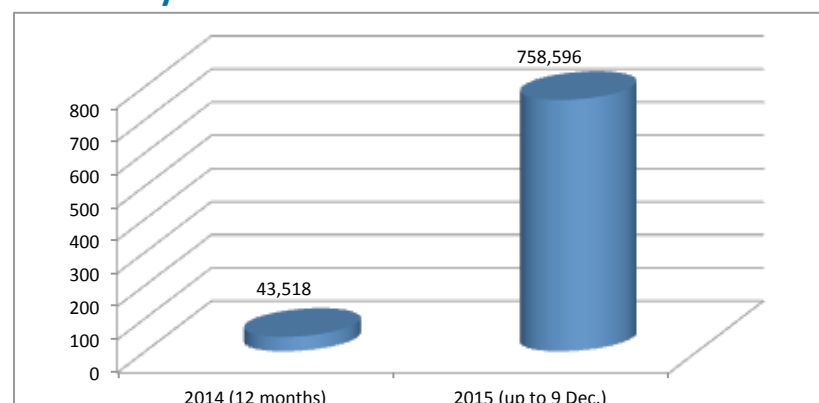
*Sources: Hellenic Coast Guard and Hellenic Police

Myths vs. Reality

Myth No 1: Greece has failed to seal its borders

Reality: Border controls at sea differ from those on land. Fences cannot be built, while, according to international law, refoulement is prohibited. On the contrary, there is an obligation to provide assistance to persons in distress at sea. Greece is meeting its international obligations with rescue operations that respect human life.

Arrivals by sea





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Myth No 2: Greece does not accept (humanitarian, Frontex) EU assistance

Reality: Frontex is already assisting Greece in identifying and registering incoming migrants on the Aegean islands. A similar operation is about to begin at the country's northern border with FYROM. Greece has also asked Frontex to launch a Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT) mechanism on the Greek islands in the Aegean. What Greece does not accept is common patrols and observers from FYROM at her borders, since guarding borders is a national responsibility. Greece has asked for 1,600 border guards and 100 Eurodac machines and has received so far only 170 border guards and 48 Eurodac machines. Greece has also activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism so as to receive material support to help it cope with the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in the country.

Myth No 3: Greece has not made progress in relocating refugees

Reality: Thirty refugees from Greece and 129 from Italy have been relocated already to other EU countries. Another 46 refugees are ready to be relocated from Greece. The number of relocations is small, but this is not Greece's or Italy's fault because the relocation program depends on the cooperation of refugees as well as EU member states, which must make concrete offers of accommodation and designate national contact points for coordination with Greece and Italy.

Myth No 4: Greece has not made progress concerning migrant repatriations

Reality: Countries of origin of migrants are not always willing to cooperate in such operations. Pakistan recently refused entry to 30 Pakistani migrants out of 50 deported from Greece. Repatriations are implemented on the basis of "readmission agreements" principally agreed between the EU and third countries, making the EU contribution in this respect necessary.



SOURCE: HELLENIC COAST GUARD



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Registration

- Legislation that has been enacted foresees **five hotspots on the eastern Aegean islands of Chios, Kos, Leros, Lesvos, and Samos.**
- The **Lesvos hotspot** (registration capacity: 4,000 per day) has been established already and is in operation
- The **Kos and Leros hotspots** (registration capacity: 1,000 per day each) will be established by the end of 2015
- The **Chios and Samos hotspots** (registration capacity: 1,000 per day each) will be established by the end of January 2016
- **A registration center at Greece's border with FYROM (Idomeni) to be set up**
- Greece implements all **standards of the Eurodac system**

Reception centers, rent subsidies & host family programs

- The **Eleonas reception center (in Athens)**, with a reception capacity of 720 people, was established in August 2015
- There are **two temporary reception centers in Athens** (at the Hockey Field in Elliniko and at the Tae Kwon Do Stadium in Faliro)
- There are **new reception centers in the region of Attica** (reception capacity: 5,000 people by the end of Dec 2015 and another 5,000 by early next year) **and in the region of Macedonia, in northern Greece** (reception capacity: 10,000 people by early next year)
- **Rent subsidies and host family programs for at least 20,000 people**, with European funds, based on a Joint Declaration (signed on Dec. 14, 2015) between the European Commission and the UNHCR in collaboration with the Greek government.



SOURCE: ATHENS NEWS AGENCY MACEDONIAN PRESS AGENCY (ANA-MPA)



Unaccompanied minors

- Cooperation with the METAction (Metadrasi) NGO to offer protection and shelter for unaccompanied minors. A new reception center specifically for unaccompanied minors will soon be set up on the island of Lesbos.

Healthcare

- Emergency medical care and healthcare services for refugees at hotspots and temporary reception centers in Athens
- Two mobile medical units of the Red Cross at Greece's border with FYROM (Idomeni)

Cooperating with the EU & Turkey

EU initiatives

The Greek government is dealing with the refugee crisis in close cooperation with the EU. Greece is supporting the creation of a common European immigration policy as well as all recent EU initiatives concerning cooperation with neighboring countries (Eastern Mediterranean - Western Balkans route conference, Valletta Summit on Migration, Meeting of EU heads of state or government with Turkey)

Turkey

The Greek government is pursuing multilevel cooperation with Turkey to optimize dealing with the refugee crisis, as well as crack down on people-smuggling networks, in terms of exchange of information, cooperation of competent authorities (police, coastguard), and implementation of readmission agreements with Greece and the EU.

Cost of the refugee crisis

- Greece has spent until now 1 billion euros from its national budget. 33 million euros from European Asylum Funds have been advanced, while 50 million euros of emergency EU financial aid have been approved.
- A special administrative unit for the absorption of European assistance was established in August 2015 in order to overcome bureaucratic obstacles.
- The cost of hospital medical care for 2,000 refugees and migrants exceeds 800,000 euros.