

# Accommodation update



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“I really like going to the playground, I love the swings. I have met many children from the neighbourhood, and we have become friends”. Eight-year-old Alisar Bakri, a Palestinian asylum-seeker from Syria, plays on a swing outside her house in Heraklion, Crete, where she lived with her parents and her four sisters. Malek Bakri, 41, his wife Abed Maiyada, 40, and their daughters, Alisar, 8, Silina, 6, Rasil, 4, Nosrin, 3, and Manisa, 1, moved in March 2020 in an apartment provided by UNHCR partner Heraklion Development Agency as part of the EU co-funded ESTIA programme.

## Overview

By the end of September 2020, 10,501 places were transitioned to MMA, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum of Greece by UNHCR, in the context of the agreed gradual transition of the totality of the programme to the Greek authorities. 15,202 places were under UNHCR and 12,728 places were under MMA as part of the programme. In total, 27,930 places were created as part of the programme. These were in 4,638 apartments and 8 buildings, in 14 cities and 7 islands across Greece.

The Accommodation Scheme<sup>1</sup> provides rented housing to vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in Greece. Urban accommodation helps restore a sense of normalcy and provides better access to services, including education and health. People are additionally supported by social workers and interpreters who help them access medical services, employment, language courses and recreational activities.

# 27,930

Number of accommodation places

# 4,646

Number of units

# 96.1%

Occupancy rate<sup>2</sup>

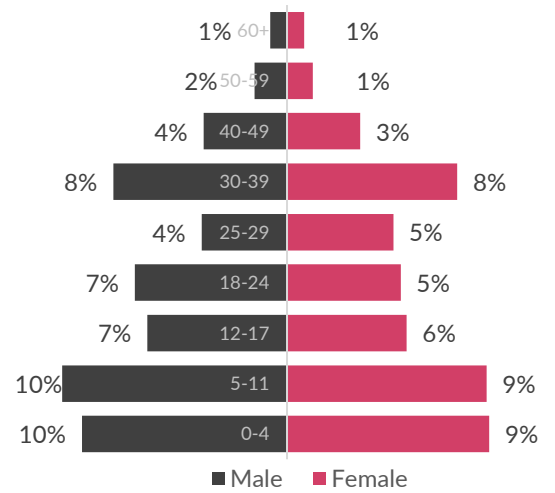
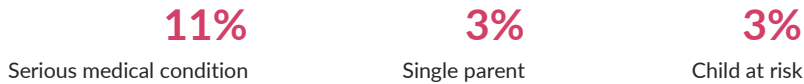
30 September 2020

<sup>1</sup>The scheme also facilitates the eventual integration of those who will remain in Greece, while the host population benefits from the renting of their apartments. UNHCR works with NGOs as well as several municipalities around Greece to provide rented accommodation in apartments and buildings. The accommodation scheme commenced in November 2015.

<sup>2</sup>The occupancy rate is calculated as the percentage of current population over actual capacity.

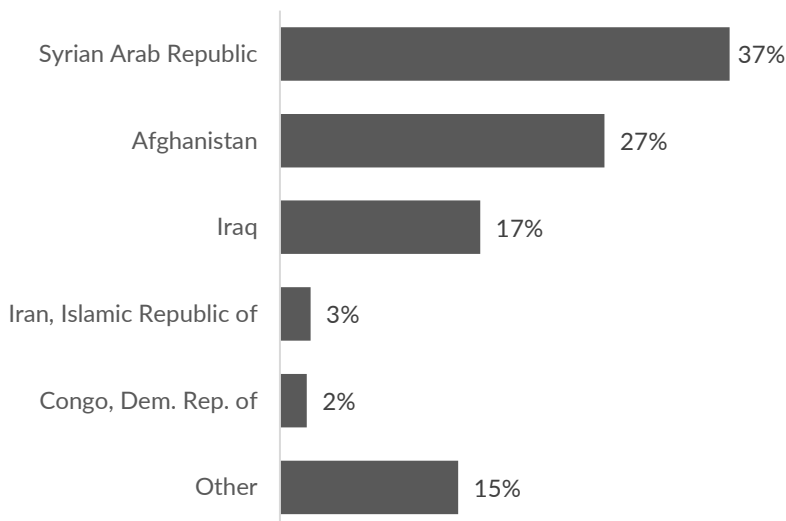
## Demographics

In total, since November 2015, 71,109 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme. 21,616 people were accommodated as of the end of September 2020, 6,748 of whom are recognized refugees. 51% of the residents are children. The clear majority of those accommodated are families, with the average family size of four people. More than one in four residents have at least one of the vulnerabilities that make them eligible for the accommodation scheme. The three most common vulnerabilities are:



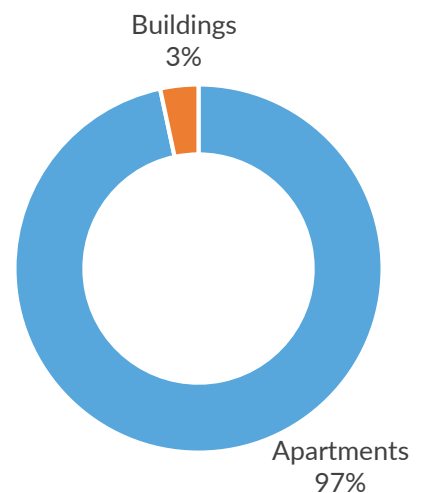
## Nationalities

The clear majority, 85% of individuals in the accommodation scheme are Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians or Congolese (DRC). However, the individuals accommodated as of the end of August 2020 speak over 30 different languages as a mother tongue.



## Accommodation Type

Over four in five accommodation places are in apartments, and the rest in buildings.



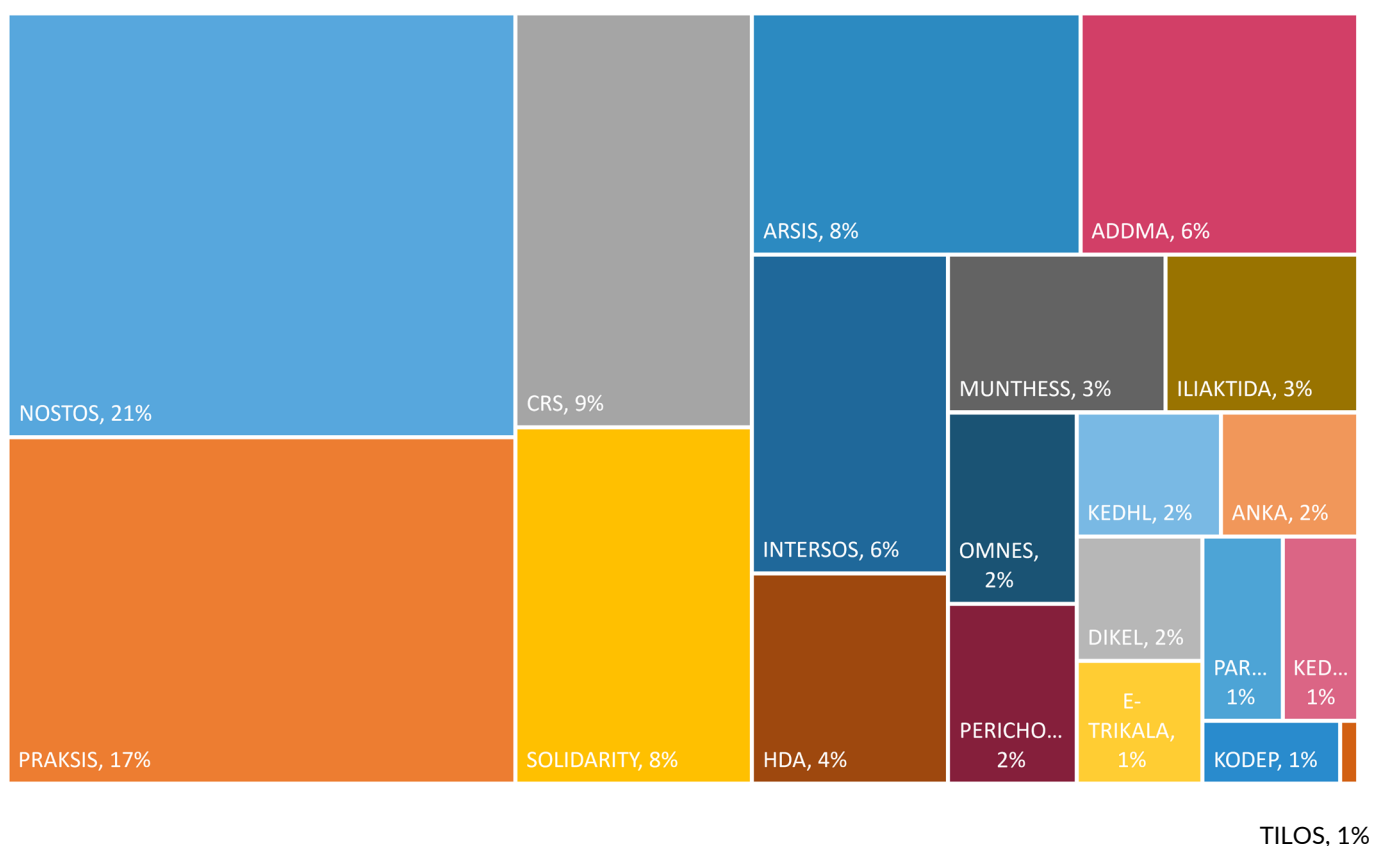
## Partners

At the end of September 2020, as part of the ongoing gradual transition UNHCR and MMA are implementing the accommodation scheme through 23 partnerships with 12 national and international NGOs and 11 municipalities. In total, partners managed by UNHCR provided 54% of the accommodation places in Greece and partners managed by MMA provided 46% of the accommodation places in Greece.

UNHCR partners GCR (Greek Council for Refugees) and METAdrasi provide social, legal and interpretation support. EPAPSY (Association for Regional Development and Mental Health) provides mental health services to refugees and asylum seekers with severe mental health conditions and disabilities.

UNHCR's accommodation partners are NGOs, Arsis (Thessaloniki, Samos, Kos, Leros, Rhodes), Intersos, Omnes, Perichoresis, Solidarity Now, and the municipalities of Athens (ADDMA), Thessaloniki (MUNTHESS), Trikala (E-TRIKALA), Livadia (KEDHL), Larissa (DIKEL), Nea Philadelphia - Nea Chalkidona (KEDFX), Karditsa (ANKA), Tripoli (PARNONAS), Piraeus (KODEP), Tilos (TILOS) and a consortium of municipalities in Crete (HDA).

MMA's accommodation partners are NGOs Arsis (Athens, Chios), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Iliaktida, Nostos. NGO Praksis has places under both UNHCR and MMA.



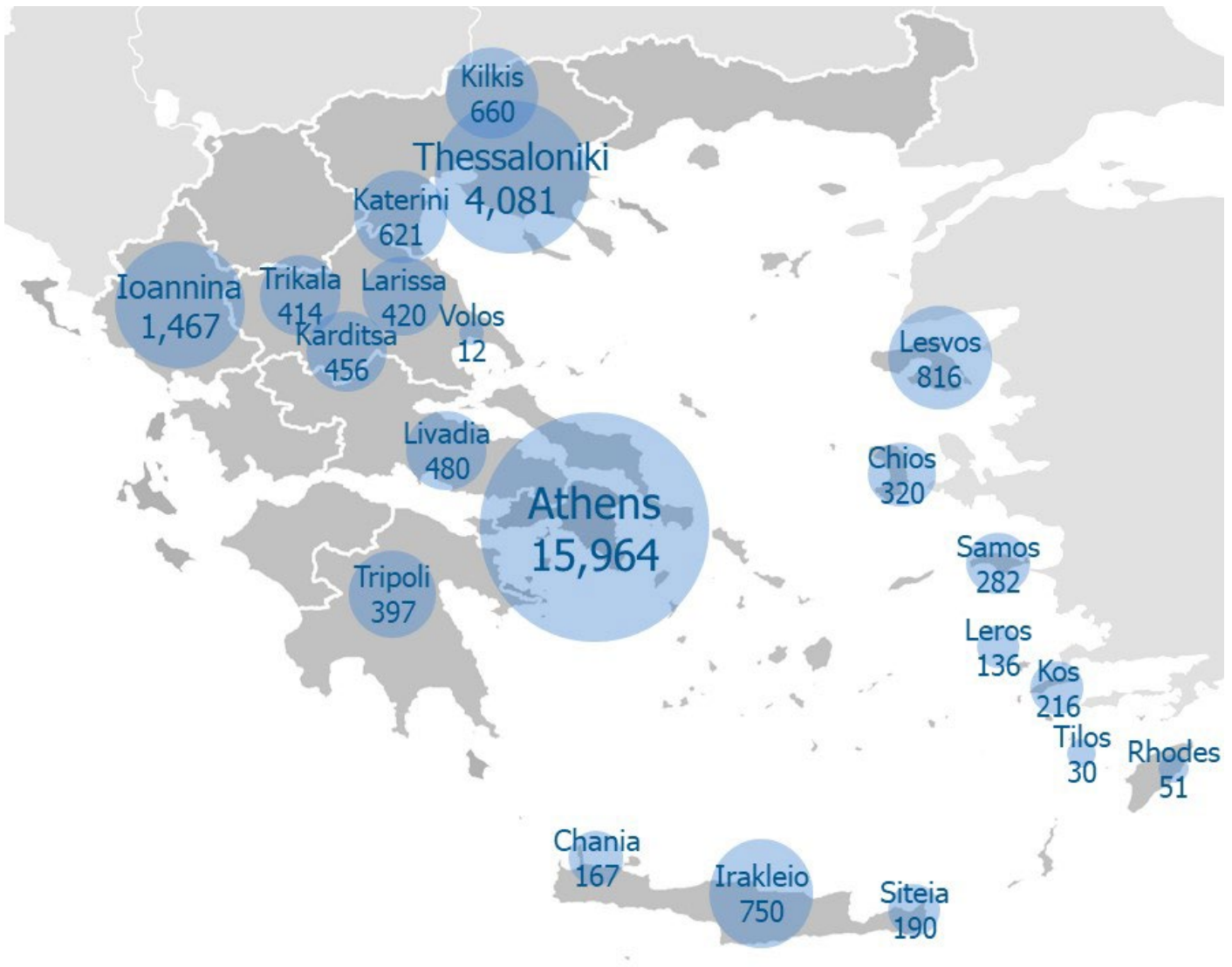
*"We had a normal life in Syria, we were neither poor nor rich. However, the war destroyed our country and our lives. We decided to leave, to escape the bombs and give our children a better future" - Malek Bakri*

*"Here we have a home, a neighbourhood. People respect us and help us as much as they can. I thank them from the bottom of my heart. My girls go to school. That's all I care about. I want to see my children moving forward and have a good life" - Abed Maiyada Bakri*

Originally from Palestine, Malek and Abed Maiyada Bakri, were born and raised in Syria. Today they live with their five daughters in an apartment in Heraklion, Crete, rented as part of the ESTIA Programme by UNHCR partner Heraklion Development Agency.

## Location of accommodation

Accommodation for asylum seekers and recognized refugees is provided in 14 cities in mainland and 7 islands. Over half, 57% of the accommodation places are in Athens, 36% in the rest of mainland, and 7% on the islands.



## Total beneficiaries

In total, since November 2015, 71,109 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme.

The Accommodation Scheme is part of the ESTIA II programme, co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union.

# 71,109

Total number of individuals accommodated

