



## RECEPTION CRISIS IN NORTHERN GREECE: THREE YEARS OF EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS

May 2019



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## INTRO

With increased refugee arrivals during 2018<sup>i</sup> and transfers from overcrowded island hotspots being an imperative, there are permanently refugees in need of shelter in mainland Greece. The Greek government never managed to move on from an emergency reception approach to more mid- or even long-term solutions. The numbers of refugees in need of shelter exceed those anticipated by Greek authorities for a third year in row. As a result, refugee camps in the mainland became once more overcrowded while substandard reception conditions have a detrimental impact upon the physical and mental health of their residents.

Camps that have ceased to operate in 2017 because of conditions re-opened their gates in spring 2018. Tents are being set up in the camps and then dismantled depending on the needs and hotels are rented as short-term shelters during the winter without seemingly any plan for what comes next. Until today only three out of the 28 camps operating in the mainland have the required legal basis.

Different forms of accommodation fuel fights and rifts between residents and often protests break because of the poor conditions. Females in particular fear for their safety and those highly vulnerable such as victims of torture are away from necessary services.

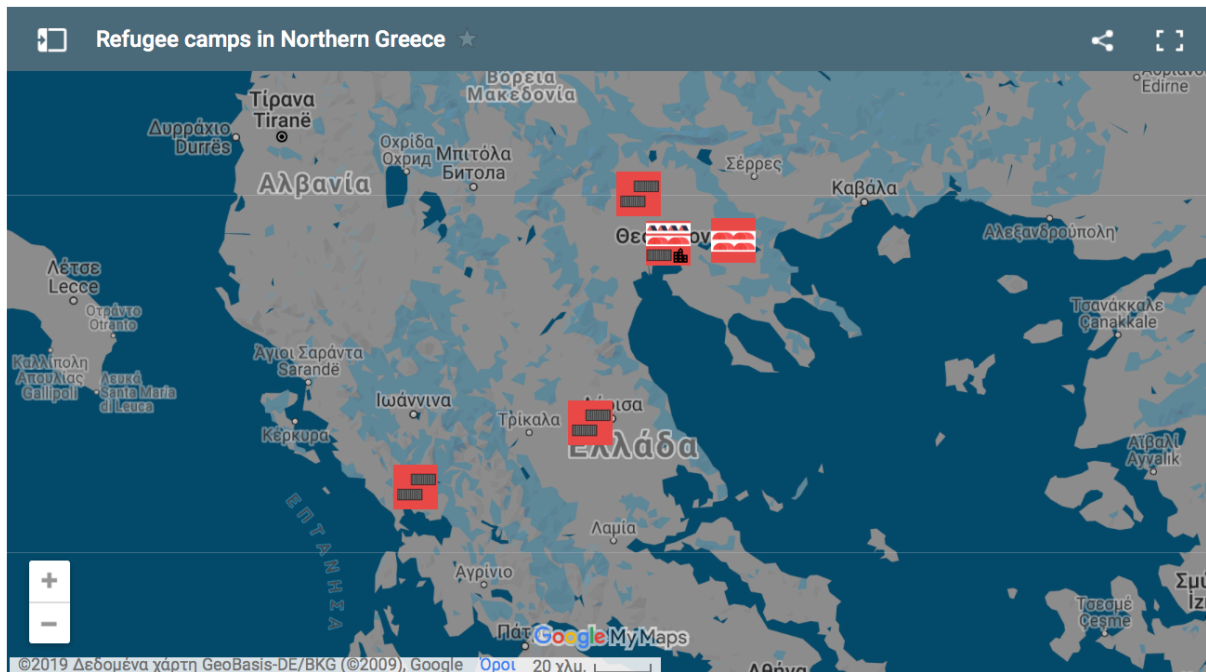
Meanwhile, recognized refugees asked to leave mainland camps following a decision by the Ministry of Migration Policy face the risk of homelessness and destitution.

The substandard conditions in Greece's mainland camps coupled with tensions and the lack of prospects, underline further the need for a functioning reception system for recognized refugees and asylum-seekers with the objective of finding dignified long-term solutions that will allow also their integration in local societies.

Increased efforts of other EU states such as Germany to return asylum-seekers and recognized refugees to Greece under the Dublin III Regulation and via a new bilateral deal on returns ignore the systemic deficiencies in Greece's reception system and their impact upon many vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers

At the end of August 2018 and in February and March 2019,<sup>ii</sup> Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) researchers conducted interviews with individual refugees and families (28 cases) living in five refugee camps in Northern and Central Greece (Central Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly).<sup>iii</sup> Those interviewed were living in the camps of Vaghiochori, Diavata, Nea Kavala, Koutsochero and Filippiada. This work is a follow-up to earlier research conducted by RSA on the reception conditions in mainland refugee camps in Attika region.<sup>iv</sup>





<https://rsaegean.org/en/reception-crisis-in-northern-greece-three-years-of-emergency-solutions - map>

## 1. PERSISTENT CHALLENGES: OVERCROWDING, AN EMERGENCY APPROACH AND LACK OF LEGAL BASIS

Mainland refugee camps have been created in response to the reception crisis caused by the closure of the Balkan corridor in March 2016 and are situated all over Greece. At the peak of the crisis, there were 40 such “emergency reception sites”. Their original residents have either been relocated to another EU country, reunified with their family, remained in Greece or reached other EU countries by travelling irregularly. Those currently living in these camps are refugees and asylum-seekers transferred from the ‘hotspots’ or those arriving from the land borders with Turkey (Evros region) and Northern Macedonia.

At the end of January 2019, UNHCR estimated that the numbers of refugees and migrants in Greece had reached more than 72.000. Out of those, 58.000 were living in the mainland<sup>v</sup>. Meanwhile, the number of refugees residing in refugee camps in mainland Greece is increasing as well as the number of camps. In September 2018, around 16.500 were living in 26 refugee camps in the mainland<sup>vi</sup> while in March 2019 there were 20.000 persons living in 28 camps.<sup>vii</sup>

**Three years after the implementation of the EU-Turkey ‘Deal’ and despite the reality of ongoing arrivals of refugees, the Greek government has not been able so far to create a functioning reception system. Short-term emergency solutions are being implemented until today. Any increase of arrivals is viewed as “unexpected”.**

During 2018, a total of 50.500 refugees arrived in 2018 in Greece compared to 36.300 in 2017 and a massive increase was observed in the arrivals from the land border (285%).<sup>viii</sup> According to UNHCR, in mid-April 2019 the total arrivals in Greece had reached more than 9.000 (sea arrivals: 5.900; land arrivals 3.400).<sup>ix</sup>

In addition, the majority of refugee camps in the mainland still **lack legal basis**. From the 28 current open camps, only three are operating on the basis of Joint a Decision by the

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competent Ministries of Economy and Migration Policy. These camps are Schisto (September 2015)<sup>x</sup>, Eleonas and Diavata (November 2016).<sup>xi xii</sup>

Consequently, there are **no minimum standards** applied in material conditions or services. The lack of legal framework also has the effect that most camps are operating without official site management but with Site Management Support (SMS). This task has been largely divided in Northern Greece among few major organisations (the International Organization for Migration, the Danish Refugee Council and the German NGO Arbeiter Samariter Bund).

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

Refugees and asylum-seekers interviewed for the purposes of this research gave us a bleak picture of their life in the camps of mainland Greece. Similar concerns were raised by refugees interviewed during field research conducted by RSA in camps of Northern Greece in 2016 and 2017<sup>xiii</sup> and by refugees interviewed in Attika camps in 2018.<sup>xiv</sup>

Those interviewed – many of them highly vulnerable – were either new arrivals from the land border or the Aegean islands or long-term residents in these camps. Some arrived in the camps on their own after arriving to Greece from the land border and others were officially transferred there from the islands.

Many described a feeling of 'abandonment'. They spoke of overcrowding and unequal housing options resulting in tensions among the refugee population in the camps and frequent fights. They described how the remoteness of the camps and the decrease in services and gradual withdrawal of the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) and NGOs had worsened their situation. They reported increasing difficulties in accessing primary health care after the take-over of health care services in camps by the National Organization for Public Health (EODY). **Protests linked to conditions have frequently taken place particularly in Diavata<sup>xv</sup>, Filippiada<sup>xvi</sup> and Koutsochero<sup>xvii</sup> camps.**



Among the interviewees, there were 16 families with small children including three single mothers. Five of the females in these families were pregnant or had new born babies. All said that they suffered from high stress as a result of the poor living conditions and fear about their children's health and safety. The ones transferred to the mainland camps from the Aegean islands' 'hotspots' spoke of their multiple traumatic experiences in the 'hotspots' and the negative impact upon their mental health.

Ten of the interviewees were victims of torture. They spoke amongst others about the deterioration of their mental health while living in these camps. Sixteen of the

interviewees had received international protection status. The continuing lack of integration measures and future prospects for beneficiaries of international protection resulted in a dead-end situation for these individuals. In February 2019, the announcement by the Ministry of Migration Policy that refugees granted asylum before July 2017 would have to leave the camps by the end of March 2019, created an atmosphere of panic and fear not only among refugees living in these camps, but also among those awaiting for a decision on their asylum claim.

On the basis of the interviews conducted the following patterns were also identified: Those interviewees who had arrived in the mainland camps during 2017 and were not provided with a flat upon or shortly after their arrival, remain in the camps until today. With one exception, the vast majority have been granted asylum in Greece<sup>xviii</sup>. Those interviewees who arrived in the camps since 2018 were most likely to be transferred at least once to another mainland camp. Pregnant women who gave birth while being resident in the camp were then provided accommodation in flats whereas one family who had arrived with a new born remained in a camp.

Interviewees, who sought shelter in the mainland camps shortly after arriving from the land borders, were first placed in large tents, rub-halls, communal spaces or summer tents. They were staying informally in the camps and could not have access to a cash-card or being transferred to flats until they completed their registration with the camp authorities, the police and registered their asylum claim. They also tended to remain in camps for longer periods, as they had to wait to register with the police and submit their asylum claim.

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## 2.1. INSUFFICIENT SERVICES AND IMPACT UPON REFUGEES LIVING IN CAMPS

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*"There are more people now, but the services are even less. People live in small tents, in the stone building. As new people arrived from the land borders they are placed wherever they fit. We tried to help them if we could. You cannot wait from this system to get help, you have to help each other."*

Ali H.\* (44)<sup>xix</sup> from Afghanistan, victim of torture, Diavata camp

*"In the camp there are only army doctors. We still pay our medicines. Only sometimes aid organisations that visit give us something for free. If we need an interpreter for the hospital, we can ask the DRC to get one. But there is no Farsi speaking interpreter in the camp. Now, they want to kick us out, those who have asylum ... us who never had the chance to learn the language and integrate, us who they put at the most remote places away from the cities."*

Qassim S.\* (30)<sup>xx</sup> from Afghanistan, Nea Kavala camp

**The vast majority of mainland camps continue to be far away from the large cities of Athens and Thessaloniki where refugees can access additional social, medical and legal assistance as well as some integration possibilities such as free language lessons and access to labor.**



The two government actors in these sites are the Reception and Identification Service (RIS)<sup>xxi</sup> and EODY. EODY (then KEELPNO) started officially providing services in the 'hotspots' on the Aegean islands in March 2017<sup>xxii</sup>. Consequently, NGOs began withdrawing. In the mainland, EODY became active in summer 2017 but provided very limited services. In the beginning of 2019, the agency was present in all mainland sites with the program "PHILOS I" and its multiple extensions planned to last until June 2019. PHILOS II is scheduled to start this year whilst the lack of doctors remains a big challenge. Under the new programme, it is envisaged that EODY will provide broader services and deploy higher numbers of staff.

In addition to the two state agencies, the International Organization for Migration (IOM)<sup>xxiii</sup>, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC)<sup>xxiv</sup> and the German NGO Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB)<sup>xxv</sup> continue to have a central role in the Site Management Services (SMS) of refugee camps around mainland Greece. In the beginning of 2019, these actors had taken over social and legal services consisted by protection teams with different constellations and numbers of professionals (mainly lawyers and social workers) in each of the camps researched.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Refugees interviewed spoke about a series of gaps in the provision of primary health care services by EODY including lack of specialised doctors (for women and children) and psychologists, not enough interpreters and army doctors being deployed where there were no EODY doctors. They also spoke about being left without interpreting when referred to hospitals. As a result, they could not communicate with health care professionals. Most of them spoke about the fear they experienced if they required emergency care because of the camp's remoteness.

## 2.2. ABSENCE OF A FORMAL PROCEDURE FOR REFERRALS OF LAND BORDER ARRIVALS TO CAMPS

*"When we arrived Greece we first went to Thessaloniki. Some people told us to go to Diavata camp and register there. The second day we were sent to the police station and registered there. We received a white paper<sup>xxvii</sup> valid for 180 days. Back in Diavata they told us to go to Vaghiochori camp by ourselves. We slept two nights in a stone building in Diavata on the ground ...".*

Baha R.\* (40)<sup>xxviii</sup> from Iran, Filippiada camp

**Whereas there is a referral procedure in place for people who are transferred from the Aegean Islands to camps in mainland Greece, there is no formal procedure for individuals arriving from the land border.**

Some interviewees, who found themselves homeless in Northern Greece either headed directly to a police stations in Thessaloniki to register, or to one of the camps that they were told would accept unregistered newcomers (i.e. Diavata, Vaghiochori or Lagadikia). UNHCR estimates that around 6.600 persons got arrested in Thessaloniki first time in the period August 2018 to March 2019. The number is similar to the ones arrested in Evros and released by the authorities there.<sup>xxix</sup> Other interviewees reported that they went directly to other camps such as Koutsochero, Nea Kavala, Filippiada or Katsikas and then stayed for a period of time in front of the sites or informally inside. They were then registered with the help of the responsible SMS (Site Management Service) first with

the police (if necessary), and then with the Ministry of Migration Policy as residents of the site. Subsequently they submitted their asylum claim upon referral by RIS or SMS.

### 2.3. RECOGNIZED REFUGEES AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS AND DESTITUTION FOLLOWING MINISTERIAL DECISION

*"There is no privilege for me as a recognized refugee compared to the asylum seekers living aside me. On the opposite, I am under constant threat to get kicked out because the camp is not for recognized refugees they say and also not the UN houses. The only work I found was informal work in the harvest where I got 12 Euro for 8-10 hours of work. I don't see a future. ... I can only give up. My days in the camp pass by without any change of my situation. All day, I sit on a chair in front of the isobox and in the night I try for hours to fall asleep. There are no lessons now, no measures to make a living, nothing."*

Behruz K.\* (22)<sup>xxx</sup> from Afghanistan, Diavata camp

*"We don't know Greece. We want to live in a city, learn Greek, find friends and jobs. I don't want to live with the help of the state but to stand on my own feet. But if they cut the help we have now, we would be forced to be homeless because we don't have anywhere to go. This is why we don't have children yet. I feel fear. I fear the future. ... Now, they want to kick us out, us who have asylum out, us who we never had a chance to learn the language and integrate, us who they put at the most far place possible from the cities".*

Qassim S.\* (30)<sup>xxxi</sup> from Afghanistan, Nea Kavala camp

In early February, the Greek Ministry of Migration Policy announced the gradual termination of accommodation to beneficiaries of international protection living in refugee camps in mainland Greece. The first group of beneficiaries of international protection required to leave their accommodation were those recognized before the end of July 2017, and the deadline given for their exit was 31 March 2019.<sup>xxxii</sup> Refugees facing eviction from camps and flats would receive cash-assistance for three months if they agreed to leave their accommodation immediately.

In the beginning of April 2019, RSA expressed concerns that such evictions would result in the affected group facing homelessness and destitution.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

At the end of February 2019, site-managing organisations started informing recognized refugees who spoke to RSA that they had to leave the camp they resided. In early March, they were called again and told to sign an informative letter that explained to them the situation. In the documented cases, the authorities did not adhere to the requirements of





Greek legislation regarding the type of the administrative act issued, the prior-hearing of the person affected and the right to judicial protection. These persons described panic and fear that they would become homeless and of spending sleepless nights ever since the announcement.

Interviewees affected by the authorities' eviction plans said that **there were not sufficient and long-term language lessons in the camps that would enable them to learn Greek**. They said that they had to travel to Thessaloniki to access language learning programs offered by NGOs, but not all of them had the financial means to do so. **Attempts to find employment, resulted in them finding low-paid informal seasonal work in the harvest**. Some reported that they had not been paid at all, others stated that they could not find employment because of the remote location of the camps they were living in. All of the interviewees had received assistance either by the SMS actors or NGOs present before (i.e. ARSIS) in getting a social insurance number (AMKA) and a tax registration number (AFM). However, they said they faced severe obstacles when they tried to submit a tax declaration. The interviewees had not been provided with information or did not have sufficient information about social benefits available in Greece and faced problems in accessing NGOs that could provide them with information about the requirements and application procedures for such benefits due to the remoteness of camps and transportation costs.

At the time of the publication of this research, the majority of the recognized refugees interviewed by RSA for the purposes of this report had escaped Greece after they learnt that they would soon become homeless and sought protection to other EU-countries. Only few remained in Greece. One of them is currently homeless and tries to collect all necessary documents that will allow him to apply for an unemployment card and KEA in order to secure his survival. Despite being homeless since the end of March, his Cash-Card got charged two weeks later and this exposed him to hunger and poverty. By the end of April, he was facing further obstacles as he was still lacking an official address. This made impossible for him to open a bank account and to get an unemployment card – all pre-requisites for applying for KEA.

## 2.4 THE IMPACT OF LIFE IN CAMPS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS: VICTIMS OF TORTURE

*"I don't feel safe ... I want to get out of this camp. To go somewhere that is safer. I am telling myself every day I am strong, but at night before I sleep everything bad comes back in my mind."*

Ibrahim H.\* (43)<sup>xxxiv</sup> Kurdish refugee from Syria, Vaghiochori camp

*"We were always escaping fights in Moria, then we were escaping the fights in Thermopiles and now in Diavata. My mental health got worse...I get angry very fast. I cannot control my mind anymore. ... I feel like a broken person. Like I crashed on a wall. I feel lost. My family is like a body torn in pieces. I lost half of them in Syria."*

Jamal S.\* (49)<sup>xxxv</sup> from Syria, Diavata camp

Greek legislation on reception and identification procedures regarding new arrivals includes victims of torture as one of the categories of vulnerable groups (Article 14(8) of Law 4375/2016).

In May 2018, a new provision was adopted (Article 23 of Law 4540/2018) stipulating that persons subjected to torture, rape or other serious acts of violence, have to be certified by medical certificates issued by a public hospital or by an adequately trained doctor of a public sector health care service provider and should receive the needed therapy or care.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Human rights actors in the field have expressed their concerns on whether the Greek state was ready to take over the certification procedure at once, and without any assistance. This transition came at a time where the public health system was already severely burdened by austerity cuts and resulting staff shortages. In addition, there is a limited number of interpreters in public hospitals as well as specialized personnel that could conduct such certification. At the same time, the merely medical approach to the certification of a torture victim is not compatible with the provisions of the Istanbul Protocol that states that a multidisciplinary approach is required and that the examining team should be including a social worker, a doctor, a psychologist and a lawyer.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Additionally, hospital staff is not yet adequately trained to work in a trauma-sensitive manner, with an intercultural approach, and to recognize victims of torture and other forms of violence.

**There are no comprehensive official statistics<sup>xxxviii</sup> available on victims of torture (VoT) in Greece. Services for the certification and rehabilitation of VoT are provided by few NGOs limited in Athens<sup>xxxix</sup> and only since November 2018 also in Thessaloniki<sup>xl</sup>. There are also no specialized shelters.**

RSA interviewed several victims of torture who had applied for asylum or are recognized refugees. They spoke evocatively on how their mental health had been affected even further due to the conditions they experienced in the camps. For those still awaiting their asylum interview, the lack of documentation of their vulnerability is likely to create disadvantages for their legal procedure. More than that, the lack of proof of their vulnerability obscures access to adequate housing in the flats of ESTIA programme (aimed to support vulnerable persons). Finally, remaining for longer periods in remote camps in the mainland means that they find it very difficult to reach organizations providing specialized assistance for their medical and psychological care.

## 2.5. RECEPTION CONDITIONS

### 2.5.1. DIAVATA



Diavata refugee camp is located 7,5km away from the centre of Thessaloniki in an industrial outskirts. It is one of the three refugee accommodation sites in mainland Greece that have been established by law (in November 2016)<sup>xi</sup>. RIS is the managing authority while ASB<sup>xiii</sup> provides site management support. EODY has a regular presence in the camp since the departure of medical NGOs such as Doctors of World and WAHA in early 2018. An ARSIS programme providing legal advice and social support to the camps' residents has ended recently. Meanwhile, according to the UNHCR's protection monitoring tool of September 2018, no special services for victims of torture were available

on site.<sup>xliii</sup>

The camp was established in the former Anagnostopoulou military camp in order to cope with the 'crisis' in Idomeni and opened on 24 February 2016.<sup>xliv</sup> Its original capacity was for 2,500 persons.

Since spring 2018, the camp has received undocumented new arrivals from the land borders. Once described as a role model by former Migration Policy Minister Mouzalas<sup>xlv</sup>, it is now one of the most overcrowded camps in mainland Greece. During the past three years, the camp has seen a series of protests.

As of 21 September 2018, there were 816 residents<sup>xlvi</sup> and the camp's reported official capacity was for 936 persons.<sup>xlvii</sup> A significant percentage of the camp's population were children (48%).<sup>xlviii</sup> Among the residents, there were also persons who were transferred in the camp in 2017 and had been subsequently granted with international protection status.<sup>xlix</sup> In 25 January 2019, the Ministry of National Defence General Secretariat of Information counted 1,357 residents.<sup>i</sup>

Refugees living in the camp have to walk along the highway to reach the next bus station or a nearby super market. Other than that, there are no other local amenities near the site. The fenced area has a guarded gate.

In May 2019, residents stayed in prefabs, UNHCR tents, a hand full of summer tents and two buildings. Some were housed informally in empty office prefabs without any provisions. The prefabs are constructed in rows around two buildings, one of which is used to house unaccompanied minors in one of 10 'safe zones' currently existing.<sup>ii</sup> The other building is used to temporarily host unregistered new

**"I DON'T SEE A FUTURE.  
I can only give up.**

My days in the camp pass by without any change of my situation. During the day, I sit on a chair in front of the isobox and at night I try for hours to fall asleep.

**THERE ARE NO LESSONS NOW, NO MEASURES TO MAKE A LIVING, NOTHING."**

Behruz K.\* (22) from Afghanistan, victim of torture and recognized refugee, Diavata camp

RSA  
#RefugeesGr  
#DiavataCamp

PRO ASYL  
DER EINZELFALL ZÄHLT.

arrivals – mainly families. Every prefab has two rooms, but only one air condition in the corridor and one bathroom. Many prefabs are shared between two families.

In the past three years, a number of protests linked to poor living conditions took place.<sup>lii</sup> <sup>liii</sup> Fights between refugees were also reported.<sup>liv</sup> <sup>lv</sup> In April 2019, the camp attracted wide international media coverage when riot police fired tear gas to hundreds of refugees who had set up an informal camp outside Diavata. The refugees hoped to revive the Balkans route, cross the borders with Northern Macedonia and then reach other EU countries.<sup>lvi</sup>

Those interviewed spoke about the recurring problem of overcrowding, difficult living conditions and lack of security including tensions arising between residents as a result of the different types of housing they are offered. Female interviewees said that they preferred to stay inside their prefabs with their children because they felt unsafe. One refugee reported he had been subjected to racist attacks on his way to the bus and his wife to harassment.

*"Here in the camp, we do not feel safe. We are permanently stressed. I don't remember any time to be relaxed here. There are fights. One time during a big fight, we Afghan men had to bring all our children and women into the prefabs and lock them inside to protect them. There were men with knives and big woods. The police didn't do anything. We had to stay in front of the houses to protect our families. Even I had to be ready to fight. You see: we escaped from war just to be in danger in Europe."*

Hassan M.\* (58)<sup>lvii</sup> from Afghanistan, Diavata camp.  
He lives in the camp with his wife Nouria M.\* (53) and their 17-year-old son.

Residents with serious health problems described having to wait in long queues in front of the medical services in order to receiving simple medicines such as painkillers. Lack of interpreters to accompany refugees to hospitals was also another cause of worry for those suffering with health problems.

For those already recognized, the lack of prospects and absence of regular language lessons in the camp dashed their hopes for a better future.

*"I don't see a future. ... I can only give up. My days in the camp pass by without any change of my situation. During the day, I sit on a chair in front of the isobox and at night I try for hours to fall asleep. There are no lessons now, no measures to make a living, nothing."*

Behruz K.\* (22)<sup>lviii</sup> from Afghanistan, victim of torture and recognized refugee, Diavata camp

### 2.5.2. NEA KAVALA



Nea Kavala camp was built in the former “Asimakopoulou” air force camp. It opened its gates on 28 February 2016 and together with Cherso were the two mass tent camps established to host the thousands of refugees evacuated from Idomeni.<sup>lx</sup> Nea Kavala camp is characteristically hosting many different nationalities.

The camp is located at the rims of Nea Kavala village next to a small countryside road and is 56 km away from Thessaloniki. The nearest town is Polykastro and it takes a refugee living in the camp between 30 and 40 minutes to reach it on foot. A return bus ticket from Polykastro to Thessaloniki costs 12 Euros.

The Greek Army and RIS are responsible for site management. Police is guarding the entrance. DRC<sup>lx</sup> took over site management support from ASB in 2018. DRC also provides legal info-sessions, individual legal counselling and representation<sup>lxi lxi</sup> and is involved in non-formal education for school age children, youth and adults. According to UNHCR, more than 60% of the children were attending formal education by mid-August 2018.<sup>lxiii</sup> An ARSIS programme supporting vulnerable refugees (children and GBV) ended by the mid of August 2018<sup>lxiv</sup>. As of September 2018, referrals of people with special needs were handled in co-operation by DRC, EODY, the Greece Army and DIOTIMA (the latter subsequently ended the program too).<sup>lxv</sup> One army was doctor providing medical care since August 2018. Two volunteer organisations (“Drop in the Ocean”<sup>lxvi</sup> and “We are here”<sup>lxvii</sup>) provide small-scale aid.

At the end of August 2018, the population consisted of new arrivals from the Aegean hotspots and the land borders as well as people who had been living in the camp for nearly two years. Many of those interviewed by RSA belonged to vulnerable groups. In September 2018, a significant part of the population was minors (37 %).<sup>lxviii</sup>

Originally, 560 tents were set up to host 2.500 persons but at the end of March 2017, the number of residents reached 3.520.<sup>lxix</sup> Tents got replaced by prefabs in November 2016.<sup>lxx</sup> Ever since, the camp is consisted of prefabs surrounded by agricultural fields. Each prefab has one room without a kitchen or bathroom. Toilettes and showers are shared and placed between the four sections of the camp. Each section has between 35 and 70 prefabs.

In mid-August 2018, transfers from Diavata and the Aegean Islands increased the number of camp residents to 765 (of 777 spaces according to UNHCR<sup>boxi</sup>) and more than one third of the total population (293) were placed inside the camp in five rub-halls for emergency housing.<sup>boxii boxiii</sup> In November 2018, the official capacity given by the Ministry of Migration Policy was 1.062.<sup>boxiv</sup> While the closure of the site was discussed at the end of 2018<sup>boxv</sup> and the rub-halls had been removed, in March 2019, UNHCR tents were set up to host around 500 newly transferred refugees from the islands.<sup>boxvi</sup>

Refugees interviewed said that they experienced lack of safety and spoke about tensions among the camp's residents, unequal shelter conditions, and a breakdown of community structures. Residents described the fear they felt about walking in the camp when it was dark. Electricity cuts were creating additional problems regarding the safety of residents during the night. Women refugees were scared to walk alone to the toilets and single women feared staying alone in the rub-halls with too many men. All residents were anxious about leaving their prefabs unprotected.

*"I don't feel safe here. The toilette is far from my house... We stay sometimes for a week inside the tent, only going out to use the toilet. When I have to use the toilet, I lock the children in the caravan to keep them safe. My children get very scared here. Life here needs a lot of patience. ... Everything is difficult here because I am a mother alone."*

Anissa K.\* (34)<sup>boxvii</sup> from Syria, Nea Kavala camp. She was staying with her four children in the camp in August 2018 and has now reunified with her husband in Germany.



Interviewees said that the health care services on site were insufficient in numbers and specialties (i.e. no gynaecologist and no paediatricians) and that there were not enough interpreters. They reported that in case of emergency they had to request the police guards to call an ambulance and that the guards did not always accept to do so. The nearest public health centre is 5km away and the Kilis General Hospital is 27km away. A pharmacy is more than 2km away. This posed particular problems to pregnant women, persons with mental health issues, persons with severe and chronic conditions and victims of torture who often require more complex examinations, regular doctor visits and treatment. Asylum-seekers and recognized refugees alike also criticised a lack of integration measures (no access to vocational training, insufficient language classes and lack of information on the Greek social welfare system).

*"When my girlfriend gave birth in Kilis hospital, she had a caesarean. After five days she came with the baby back to the camp. The doctor had given her a certificate stating that she should not have to live in the camp with the baby for reasons of hygiene and to protect their health from any infections. We gave this paper to the camp doctor and he also said we should get a flat. But we are still here. The caravan is very bad for the baby and for the mom. The heater is not working well, so our child got bronchitis and there is no paediatrician here."*

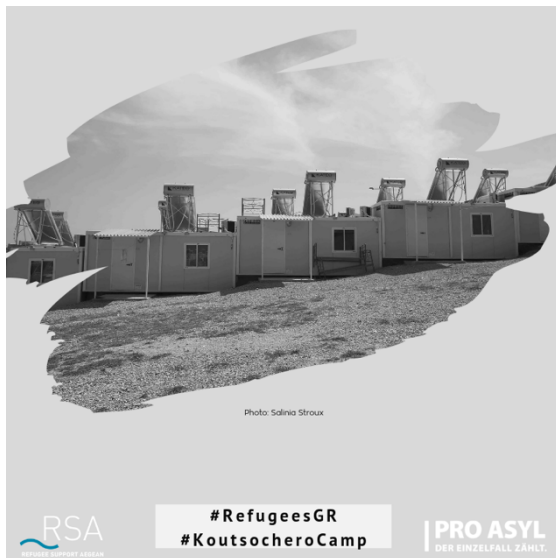


*We have to bring our child to Kilkis hospital when he is sick. My girlfriend had the operation and for her it was very hard to go to the remote toilets and then it is always dirty. We get both the Cash-Card, but we cannot survive from it because we have many expenses since the child was born. We pay our medicines ourselves, transport costs to the hospital and the Asylum Service, the child needs pampers and clothes... There is no social assistance here. Our baby stays without anything."*

Romeo S.\* (41)<sup>lxxviii</sup> from Congo DRC, Nea Kavala camp

He stays with his girlfriend Noella S.\* (31). They have a newborn daughter now. Each of the parents has a serious vulnerability.

### 2.5.3. KOUTSOCHERO



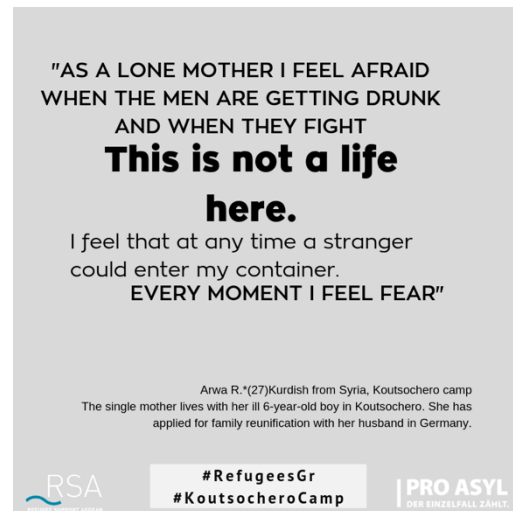
Koutsochero camp is situated 20km away from the city of Larissa. The camp was created in the former Efthimiopoulou military base and opened in 20 March 2016. Its reported original capacity was for 1.300 and it had 300 tents.<sup>lxxix</sup> It was closed on 28 June 2016, following protests by residents who then got transferred to Kipselochori site.<sup>lxxx</sup>

Five months later, on 23 November 2016<sup>lxxxi</sup>, Koutsochero reopened its gates. Since April 2018, the numbers of residents have been increasing steadily. In summer 2018, another 70 prefabs<sup>lxxxii</sup> were placed in the camp in order to host around 500 new arrivals. In September 2018, the camp hosted over 1.423 individuals<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

and its official capacity was 1.681<sup>lxxxiv</sup>. Koutsochero is one of the largest but also most remote refugee camps in mainland Greece. As of September 2018, it hosted a high percentage of men (53%).<sup>lxxxv</sup>

The camp is situated in a valley between two hills. The barren countryside scenery is marked by the futuristic white prefabs set up in rows. There is the "old camp" with one-room prefabs and the "new camp" with two-room prefabs. In the latter, two families share one prefab. On the front, there is a police checkpoint and a bus station next to a parking area before one reaches the highway. Crossing to the other side, one has to walk between 15 and 20 minutes through the fields to reach the nearby village Mandra, which has one supermarket and a kiosk.

The Greek Army is responsible for site management and DRC provides site management support.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> DRC is also providing legal information sessions, individual legal counselling and representation<sup>lxxxvii</sup>. Furthermore, the organisation is involved in the provision of non-formal education for school aged children, youth and adults. At the time of RSA's research in August 2018, EODY was tasked with providing primary health care to the camp's residents as well as the identification of those vulnerable. However, there was only one army doctor seeing residents during weekday mornings. According to the protection monitoring tool of UNHCR in September 2018, people with special needs were not being identified in a timely manner and referred to services and there were no special services for victims of torture.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> During the period of RSA's research, services provided in the camp were limited (i.e. legal aid and language lessons). As of September 2018, less than 60 % of the children living in the camp attended formal education.<sup>lxxxix</sup>



Protests started in Koutsochero shortly after the arrival of the first groups of residents in 2016. They demanded to be transferred in better places and denounced the bad living conditions.<sup>xc</sup> In the past three years, protests continued over specific problems such as delays in loading Cash-Cards<sup>xcj</sup> and the disappearance of a 12-year-old girl<sup>xcii</sup>. The substandard living conditions also remained a major source of anger.<sup>xciii</sup>

Interviewees spoke about their concerns about security in the camp including fights between residents and reported criminality and drug / alcohol abuse.

*"As a lone mother I feel afraid when the men are getting drunk and when they fight. Once they burnt some containers down. This is not a life here. I feel that at any time a stranger could enter my container. Every moment I feel fear. Fear of the other next door, who I don't know. Fear from all these single men living around us. I feel afraid for the health of my son who is ill and we are far from the hospitals. I feel afraid to get stuck here. ... I tell you what I feel every night before I sleep. My feeling is being scared, being alone, hugging my son with my blanket in one room where there is no security, no people to solve problems, and I am missing my husband."*

Arwa R.\* (27)<sup>xciv</sup> Kurdish from Syria, Koutsochero camp  
The single mother lives with her ill 6-year-old boy in Koutsochero. She has applied for family reunification with her husband in Germany.

*"In Koutsochero ... we are all in a very bad situation. ... The new ones all have their interviews in 2020 and 2021. The old ones who are recognized have to be out soon. Also, a lot of people are rejected ... A lot of people [transferred from the islands] are ill. The mental health of people here is worse. First of all because they were already psychological sick, because of their problems and also because the fights and problems between refugees."*

Basr G.\* (29)<sup>xcv</sup> from Iraq, recognized refugee and victim of torture, Koutsochero camp

Distance from services and hospitals situated in the city of Larissa were another cause of worry and some interviewees reported that in cases of emergency, the ambulance would usually arrive very late. In addition, transport costs placed a significant burden to the stretched finances of those living in this remote camp. Often residents have to travel to Athens or Thessaloniki to access social services and to Larissa to buy affordable food. They said that when they visit Athens or Thessaloniki they are often obliged to stay overnight and sleep rough as they cannot afford accommodation.

#### 2.5.4. FILIPPIADA



Filippiada camp was established in the former "Petropoulaki" army camp in Epirus. It is located in a mountainous area and is about 4km distance from the same named village. The nearest towns are Arta (13,7km) and Ioannina (58,2km). The camp is situated on a large gravel-covered area. The back of the camp faces a dense forest.

The Greek Army, the Ministry of Migration Policy and RIS are responsible for camp management. Since 15 February 2018, Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB) has been responsible for site management support.<sup>xcvi</sup> EODY staff provides primary health care. A program run by ARSIS providing

assistance to vulnerable refugees (children and victims of GBV) ended in December 2018.<sup>xcvii</sup> Until then, the organization in co-operation with EODY was managing referrals of people with special needs.<sup>xcviii</sup>

Filippiada opened on 18 March 2016, it had a reported official capacity of 700 and it was consisted of 83 tents.<sup>xcix</sup> In November 2016, tents were replaced with prefabs.<sup>c</sup> The number of residents did not exceed 200 to 300 persons until July 2018<sup>ci</sup> when the Ministry of Migration Policy extended the site and placed additional prefabs in order to host another 100 to 200 persons<sup>cii</sup> transferred from Samos and other Aegean islands.<sup>ciii</sup> In May 2019, two dozens of single women from African origin were reportedly transferred to the site as well as a dozen of Farsi-speaking families.

In mid-October 2018, the camp had a reported official capacity of 700 and 487 residents.<sup>civ</sup> The majority of residents during that period were children (53 %). At the end of January 2019, the number of residents reached 570 following transfers from the islands.<sup>cv</sup>

Refugees speaking to RSA were worried about access to medical assistance as among the camps residents were vulnerable persons such as pregnant women young children, persons with chronic conditions and victims of torture. Those interviewed were concerned about the limitations in the services provided by EODY and the visiting army doctor including the lack of psychologist and gynaecologist in the camp. They stated, that by the end of 2018 until today there were weeks where only nurses were present and no doctor was visiting. Residents told RSA that a paediatrician was visiting the camp once a week.

Limited interpretation was another cause of worry.

At the time of RSA's initial research in August 2018, there was only an Arab interpreter and no interpreter for Farsi in the camp. Refugees needing hospital or specialized treatment had to travel to Arta or Ioannina and to buy medicines they had to go to a pharmacy located 4km away in Filippiada village. They were also very worried about the time that an ambulance would take to come to the camp in emergency cases. Transport costs to access health care, and other services found only in Athens and Thessaloniki (i.e. for victims of torture) added to their concerns. / ASB was providing for free transfers to Ioannina and Arta regularly on specific days.<sup>cv</sup>

*"When my son had to be transferred to hospital for his infection, the ambulance took him to Arta. There was no dermatologist that day. We were then told we had to go back on our own and find our way to Ioannina hospital. What will happen if one of us has an emergency case?"*

Baha R.\* (40)<sup>cvii</sup> from Iran, Filippiada camp  
She escaped with her husband Amir K.\* (50), who is a victim of torture and their two children. They arrived in Filippiada camp from Vaghiochori.

*"My husband sleeps at the door of our container to protect us. Some women here lost their babies and had miscarriages from the stress and fear. I am lucky my baby was born healthy. I was scared because we are far from the hospital. I got asthma from the life in a container. Actually, this is not a life... . We don't have a today and there is no hope for a tomorrow."*

Parwana K.\* (38)<sup>cviii</sup> from Afghanistan, recognized refugee, Filippiada camp  
She fled with her husband Mohammad L.\* (40) and their three children. They arrived from Lesbos island and left Greece by the end of 2018.

Those interviewed spoke about their worry about lack of security in the camp and fights breaking between refugees and said there were problems with the weak electricity.

*"Recently there was a big fight with knives. How should we protect them here? During the fight we escaped outside of the camp and hugged our children tight until it was over. That night we slept outside of the camp from fear. They built a playground for the children now*



*inside the camp, but we are scared to go there or to let our children go there. The camp is very dark during the night. ... I just tell you, I have daughters and we cannot go out of the container. There is a lot screaming and other scary noises. There are a lot of single men."*

Fachnaz K.\* (30)<sup>cxix</sup> from Syria, Filippiada camp

She escaped from Aleppo with her husband Mezgid M.\* (35) and their four children. They arrived from Diavata camp after crossing the land border.

In September 2016, local parents protested about the enrolment of refugee children in the village school.<sup>cx</sup> As of September 2018 less than 60% of children living the camp attended formal education.<sup>cx</sup> As of October 2018, there were no interpretation services available for the school and no vocational training for adults in the site.<sup>cxii</sup>

### 2.5.5 VAGHIOCHORI



Vaghiochori temporary accommodation site (refugee camp) is an hour's drive from Thessaloniki (50km) and in walking distance to a small village of 60 inhabitants with the same name.

The camp is situated in the site of the former Vaghiochori primary school. The camp<sup>cxiii</sup> opened as emergency accommodation site for refugees at the end of May 2016<sup>cxiv</sup> following the evacuation of Idomeni. This remote camp has been used mainly as a transit camp during the past three years. There is no supermarket and no kiosk within a 5km radius.

It has been closed down twice (on 15 January 2017<sup>cxv</sup> and in October 2018<sup>cxvi</sup>) because of the

poor conditions but is scheduled to re-open in May 2019 in order to host the refugees transferred from the islands or arriving from the land border.<sup>cxvii</sup>

On 11 September 2018, the camp had a reported official capacity of 552 persons<sup>cxviii</sup> and 348 residents. 42% of its residents were children. The camp consisted of 78 UNHCR tents<sup>cxix</sup>. The Greek Army was managing the site and site management support was provided by IOM.

The camp is situated more than 10km away from the next public health facility and hospital. Public transport is limited and before its second closure last October, the camp's residents had to travel to Thessaloniki for hospital appointments or appointments with the Regional Asylum Office.

The first refugees transferred to Vaghiochori in June 2016 protested and denied exiting the buses.<sup>cx</sup> During that year, it became camp of last resort and was used mainly to host those who were arriving from the land borders and had no other place to go. Its' re-opening on 3 June 2018 marked a period where arrivals from the land border with Turkey had peaked,

Diavata and Lagadikia camps were overcrowded and the hotspots in the Aegean had to be decongested.<sup>cxxii</sup>

Residents interviewed by RSA in August 2018 said that the conditions in the tents exposed to the weather were tough, as rain would flood them. They said that there was no heating, air conditioning or electricity. They described how sewage water would run inside the tents that were set up next to the toilets and showers.

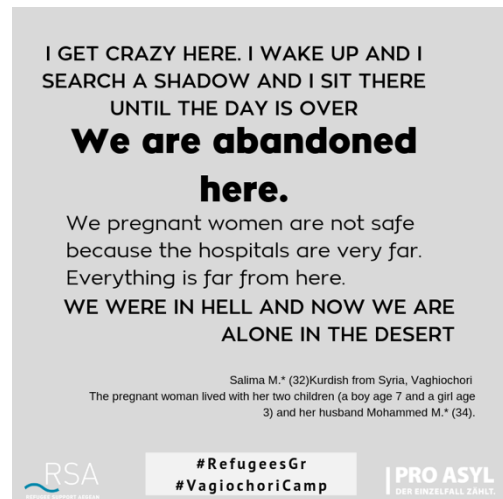
Food catering was offered once a day for the new arrivals, who had not yet received cash-cards. Old residents had to make fires to cook and to warm themselves.

A group of volunteers provided activities for children outside the camp to play with the children but there were no formal or informal educational activities offered for children and for adults inside the camp.

People said that they felt 'abandoned' and spoke of a deteriorating mental health as a result of the poor conditions and the trauma they experienced during their flight and then stay in the Aegean hotspots.

*"I get crazy here. I wake up and I search a shadow and I sit there until the day is over. We are abandoned here. I wake up in the nights from the stress about our future. ... We pregnant women are not safe because the hospitals are very far. Even if the ambulance would come at the end, who would bring us back here? Everything is far from here. One day I couldn't feel my baby moving anymore. I was terrified. I thought what I would do in an emergency case. ... We were in hell and now we are alone in the desert."*

Salima M.\* (32)<sup>cxxiii</sup> Kurdish from Syria, Vaghiochori  
The pregnant woman lived with her two children (a boy age 7 and a girl age 3) and her husband Mohammed M.\* (34).



*"I am pregnant, our daughter has a serious medical problem and is in need of an operation. She suffers also from psychological problems. Also, my husband has a problem with his liver. ... (W)e were told our medical problems would get a good treatment as soon as we would be transferred to the mainland. From the first day we arrived here I am telling them about our medical problems, but nothing happens... The soldiers here are just telling us to have patience. Then one day at the end of August the heartbeat of our baby was very low. They called an ambulance. I wanted my husband to go with me. ... He had to stay in the camp because of our kids. In the hospital they said I should return another day for a second appointment. .... I don't speak English. It was 8pm and the latest bus had left two hours earlier. I didn't know what to do. My husband couldn't help me also. He was trying to find help in the camp, but no one was listening to him. He cut his arms in front of them."*

Alma K.\* (26)<sup>cxxiv</sup> from Syria, Vaghiochori  
The mother lived with her husband Mahmoud K.\* (36) and their four children



### 3. ANNEX – SELECTED INTERVIEWS

#### DIAVATA

##### HASSAN M.\* (58) AND NOURIA M.\* (53)

1. Hassan M.\* (58) and his wife Nouria M.\* (53)<sup>cxv</sup> from Afghanistan escaped to Greece with their 17-year-old son. Hassan suffers from high blood pressure and high cholesterol; Nouria is diabetic. The vulnerable family arrived in Greece in early summer 2018 through the land border. For three months they stayed in the camp informally.

Hassan told us at the end of last August: *"When we arrived in Greece we reached Thessaloniki on our own. ... We went to the Asylum Service to apply for asylum, but they told us we should go to a police station or any refugee camp to register first. Some other refugees told us to go to Diavata camp. There the police at the gate called the Aliens Police Department (Allodapon) and asked them to register us.*

***We slept in a small tent during this first period... . We stayed for one month unprotected from the strong rainfalls of that period, getting wet again and again. Then we moved into the stone building in the middle of the camp for 15-20 days. ... We suffered a lot because it was cold, humid and we slept on the floor... . We felt very unsafe. We had no choice, so we broke into an empty prefab house.***

Fifteen days after our registration with the police we had an appointment with the Asylum Service for pre-registration. Our appointment for the asylum application was scheduled for early September (2018).

Here in the camp, we do not feel safe. We are permanently stressed. I don't remember any time to be relaxed here. There are fights. One time during a big fight, we Afghan men had to bring all our children and women into the prefabs and lock them inside to protect them. There were men with knives and big woods. The police didn't do anything. We had to stay in front of the houses to protect our families. Even I had to be ready to fight. You see: we escaped from war just to be in danger in Europe."

In October 2018 the family got finally registered in the camp as residents and from then on inhabited the container officially. Then they also started receiving cash-assistance. The family had their asylum interview in early winter 2019.

***"The main problem we face now is that the camp is overcrowded. Even inside the containers they place always two families. We were with another family until recently, but they left. Eight persons we shared two rooms, one bathroom and kitchen. The second problem is the distance from the city. We cannot access the services there easily, we cannot attend lessons there; we cannot learn the Greek culture. If you do not speak Greek, there is no job. But I cannot work anyway. I am old and sick. Our son has to study, but he will have to support all***

**of us. Now that our interview passed, we are scared of receiving asylum and being kicked out of the camp like the others. There is always fear ruling our lives and not opportunities.”**

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SULEIMAN L.\* (25)

2. Suleiman L.\* (25)<sup>cxxvi</sup> is from Afghanistan and a torture victim. He arrived on Samos shortly after the EU-Turkey 'deal' came into effect and nearly a year later was granted refugee status. He was transferred to Diavata camp almost a year after his arrival in Greece.

**“When I was granted asylum, I was told: ‘Either you accept to go to Diavata or you will become homeless.’ I accepted. Here we are far from integration. We are far from a future. We are also far from our families. My wife and my three children are in Kabul. I applied for family reunification as soon as I arrived in the mainland. I want to bring them to safety. It has been 16 months since I applied. But I have no answer. I am spending days and nights worrying about them. They are in danger.**

*Since I arrived in Greece I got injured several times: On Samos, in Diavata. Last time, I got injured on my head by a knife...*

*I try everything to integrate and to get independent from state help. I tried finding work, but the only thing I found was work in the harvest in Thiva. My friends and me live together in one container. We worked in different periods, because one is always needed to stay back in the camp and protect our shelter. Otherwise some stranger will just take it. I tried learning Greek but the lessons here have no continuity. The teachers change and the lessons start from zero again and again. Nobody asked us what knowledge we have and if we learned a specific profession.*

*I got political asylum here and I got documents. I applied for AMKA, AFM and I made tax declarations. I even applied for an unemployment card. After all this, the Greek government didn't do anything for me to learn the language, to find a job and a place to stay. We all speak our own languages here until today: Dari, Farsi, Arabic, Kurdish....!”*

Suleiman was evicted from Diavata camp in March 2019 following the Ministry of Migration Policy announcement on the gradual termination of accommodation to beneficiaries of international protection living in refugee camps in mainland Greece. Suleiman was given a copy of the Ministry's announcement and an informative letter about his eviction that he had to sign in order not to lose his right of receiving cash-assistance for another three months. Suleiman did not receive any information or advice on social welfare or housing. Since the end of March, he has been homeless.

He told us that many of his friends left Greece last February for other EU countries after the Ministry's announcement. He has stayed as his family reunification request is pending but he has not received any answer so far. He describes how he is thinking all day about his children and cannot concentrate. They call him and say they are hungry and afraid. He doesn't know what to answer.

Suleiman was expecting his eviction when he spoke to us about his non-existent options for integration and the difficult conditions in the camp.

*“My second biggest problem now is the ongoing lack of (language) lessons that would provide me with the knowledge to get independent. I tried to find lessons in the city of Thessaloniki. Lastly, the lack of possibilities to attend any vocational training or get help to find a job is limiting my options to zero. I will find myself in the streets... Things were a little better until early 2018 but as organisations left the camp and services were cut, daily, our lives became darker. For people with asylum, there is nothing.*

***I am a victim of torture. The only place I told that is the Asylum Service during my interview. No one ever asked me. I never felt safe to tell and I did not see anyone who would be able to help me. It doesn't matter to me now, because all I care is to reach that day that I can bring my family here and then I will finally tell my children on the phone that now I know the day they will be able to join me“.***

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## NEA KAVALA

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### QASSIM S.\* (30) AND ZEYNAB S.\* (29)

**3.** Qassim S.\* (30) and his wife Zeynab S.\* (29)<sup>cxvii</sup> are Hazara from Afghanistan. The couple reached Lesbos few months after the EU-Turkey deal came into effect and managed to apply for asylum in November 2016. Zeynab was registered as vulnerable three months later. Over a year after their arrival, Qassim got subsidiary protection but Zeynab's claim was rejected. Both challenged the decisions and their appeals are pending. Zeynab has epilepsy.

During their nine-month stay on Lesbos, the couple spent six months in a summer tent in Moria camp and the remaining time in PIKPA (a camp for vulnerable persons).

When RSA met with them at the end of August 2018, they had been living in Nea Kavala camp for eighteen months. The couple described how their mental health issues deteriorated as a result of life in refugee camps.

Qassim told us: ***“The situation here was difficult from the start but it has become worse. In spring (2018), the authorities transferred many new people here from Lesbos, Chios but also from the land border via Diavata. They built five rub-halls for them. We, the old people, live in the prefabs. In the meanwhile, some of the newcomers get a flat fast, while other residents who are here for months still wait. These rules on different housing are difficult to understand and sometimes there seems to be an arbitrary preferential treatment. Many people are upset about their living conditions and ask themselves: ‘Why not me?’***

*But the living conditions are not only different between the five rub-halls and prefabs, but in general they are difficult for all of us here in Nea Kavala. Sometimes electricity gets cut. The houses consist of one-room spaces without kitchen or bathroom. We have to use shared showers and toilettes in the camp. We are far from Thessaloniki.*

*We want to live inside the Greek society and become an active part of it, but they don't let us. The last time we went there was one month ago to renew our asylum seekers' cards. We have to use the public bus and it costs me 6 Euro one way from Polykastro [round-trip: 9 Euro]. ....*

*Since the UN left some months ago the situation has become worse. There is nothing to do...There is no help to find a job and get independent. It has been a month since the new doctor arrived. But no one goes to him and he just sits in his container.... DRC told us in emergencies we should tell the police guarding the camp to call the ambulance, but they don't call most of the times we ask them to ... .*

***We want to live in a city, learn Greek, find friends and jobs. I don't want to live with the help of the state but to stand on my own feet. But if they cut the help we have now, we would become homeless because we don't have anywhere to go. This is why we don't have children yet. I feel fear. I fear for the future. And this despite the fact that I have experiences of many different jobs.***

By the end of February 2019, the couple had not received an answer to their appeals. They felt abandoned.

Qassim said to us: "My mental health has deteriorated. I feel more ill now.... Now, they want to kick us who have asylum out, us who we never had a chance to learn the language and integrate, us who they put at the most remote place possible away from the cities. The only improvement is that the heater is working and electricity is stable now. So, our little prison has become more comfortable."

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JONAS G.\* (21)

4. Jonas G.\* (21)<sup>cxxviii</sup> is from Congo DRC and a victim of torture. In July 2017, he was granted refugee status on Lesbos one year after his arrival on the island. Shortly after, he was transferred to Nea Kavala camp. Jonas suffers from mental and physical health problems.

***"I am in this camp now for one year and two months. It is not easy here. We live five persons in one container. I have many medical problems but here this is like the first thing they don't care about. We are far from everything, but most of all we are far from the hospitals. Transport is a major problem. And there is only one military doctor here. But I don't count him. He says just: You are fine. There is also no regular psychologist.***

*We have nothing to do here. I want to learn a language, I want to be trained or study. Instead, I sit here and wait without knowing for what I wait. Nobody ever asked what I can do and what I want to do in the future. If you want to find a job, you need to go to the cities, but we cannot afford the transport back and forth or to rent a house there.*

*If you are a recognized refugee, they don't care about you. If you ask for help, they don't do anything. They always say: 'Wait!' I fought hard to get an AFM and an AMKA. I didn't know how to do that. We are new here. We need assistance. Without help we are blocked.*

*I get 150 euro a month since I arrived here. I heard about the Social Solidarity Fund and I wanted to apply for it, but I was told I have no right to get it because I live in a camp. So I cannot change anything. I cannot make myself independent.*

*I feel there is no difference between me and a person who has no residence permit in Greece. Even we have seemingly less rights. I tried to apply for a place in a UN flat last year. But they said I had no right for that as I got asylum in Greece... .*

*I feel as soon as we get papers here, they forget us. We just do not exist for them. At the same time, I don't feel safe in the camp... . People fight inside the camp with knives*

sometimes. Others hurt themselves. No one cares. The police does not intervene. When we call them for help, they just say they will come, but they never do."

In February 2019, Jonas was notified by camp management, that he had to leave the camp by the end of March along with a dozen other African refugees.

**"They knocked my door and told me the Ministry had decided people who got asylum before July 2017 should leave the camp... . They said we'd get our Cash-Card for another three months and then it would be cut. If we denied leaving the camp, they'd cut the Cash-Card immediately and call the police to take us out by force. They gave us the information paper about these decisions. That was all. No advice on integration or other information to help us. Since then people are going crazy. We did not expect that and then one day we are just told to go. We asked them where we should go and what we should do. They said, they don't know. The Ministry didn't tell them. Then they gave the usual answers: 'Wait.' 'We will see...' ...**

*I have an AFM and an AMKA, but I could not get any other papers until now. I don't know how to do that and no one seems to want to help us in that. We don't know the system. I just understood I could not do things without having a proper address. Some of us left the camp directly after they heard the news and they are trying to find solutions in Athens or Thessaloniki. I want to go to the school because my plan is to study medicine. At the moment I am still in shock. But what should we do? I will not give up. I will keep my head above water!"*

At the end of March 2019, Jonas had to leave the camp and became homeless.

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#### ROMEO S.\* (41) AND HIS PARTNER NOELLA S.\* (31)

**5.** Romeo S.\* (41) and his partner Noella S.\* (31)<sup>cxix</sup> are from Congo DRC. They met in Moria and fell in love. Noella got subsidiary protection but Romeo has been rejected and waits on his appeal. During the meeting with RSA, Noella was six months pregnant. Both had experience different forms of violence in their home country and suffer from mental health issues and physical health problems.

Romeo told us: *"I arrived on Lesbos in October 2016 and my girlfriend two months later. We were both transferred to Nea Kavala in March 2017. Our asylum interviews took place in summer 2017 in Thessaloniki. My answer came a year later.*

*In Moria and Nea Kavala we don't get medical help or psychological therapy. We were visiting both a psychologist in Nea Kavala at some point, but he left. There is no gynaecologist and my girlfriend needs regular check-ups for the pregnancy.*

**The living conditions here are bad. We asked for a flat three months ago, but they told us to wait. I have to accompany my girlfriend everywhere to protect her. Women don't feel safe here. They risk being molested or even raped.**

*How can we build a future with our young family when even my stay in Greece is not sure? I am thinking a lot about that. We are both stressed about the day of birth. We cannot communicate with the ambulance. We have to inform the police to call them, but we*

*cannot communicate also with them. I feel there are no solutions for us here. I lived here for 11 months just to get a rejection."*

When RSA spoke with the couple again, their baby was two and half months old. Romeo was still awaiting to hear on his appeal decision and they had applied for a residence permit for their baby based on Noella's legal status. The living conditions for the young family remained hard.

***"We have been now for nearly two years in this camp. In the beginning there were a lot of organisations helping families. ... We cannot get a flat, they say because my girlfriend has asylum. ... When my girlfriend gave birth in Kilis hospital, she had a caesarean. After five days she came with the baby back to the camp. The doctor had given her a certificate stating that she should not have to live in the camp with the baby for reasons of hygiene and to protect their health from any infections. We gave this paper to the camp doctor and he also said we should get a flat. But we are still here. The caravan is very bad for the baby and for the mom. The heater is not working well, so our child got bronchitis and there is no paediatrician here. We have to bring our child to Kilis hospital when he is sick. My girlfriend had the operation and for her it was very hard to go to the remote toilets and then it is always dirty. We get both the Cash-Card, but we cannot survive from it because we have many expenses since the child was born. We pay our medicines ourselves, transport costs to the hospital and the Asylum Service, the child needs pampers and clothes... There is no social assistance here. Our baby stays without anything. I tried to find a job in Thessaloniki. I got an offer, but they said it was a problem I live in Nea Kavala..."***

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## KOUTOSCHERO

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### AMMAR K.\* (34) AND HIS WIFE JAMILA K.\* (27)

**6.** Ammar K.\* (34) and his wife Jamila K.\* (27)<sup>xxxx</sup> from Homs in Syria fled to Greece with their three children aged 8, 5 and 3. When RSA met them at the end of August 2018, they also had a baby that was 40 days old.

*"I was 7 months pregnant when we arrived on Lesbos... .*

*Two weeks ago, we were finally transferred to Koutsochero camp. It is better than Lesbos, but we are far from the city and we have to wait for a long time for our interview. Our asylum appointment was scheduled for the summer of 2020 in Athens.*

***We have one caravan [prefab] for our family now. It is in the new section of the camp. They have not yet connected well the water and electricity lines. Lights were placed here just two days ago. The water from the tap is dirty. We cannot drink it. When it rains all the floor turns into mud and we cannot move around. Behind us, there is a mine and at times when we can hear the explosions, I wince.***

*I stay always inside the house because I am scared to move around the camp. There are many people living here and we don't know who is a friend and who is an enemy. There are also many men. The people who live here come from all over Greece: from other camps like Diavata or Vaghiochori and from the islands, like us. At night, it is very dark. I see bad dreams.*



*We had a Cash-Card from Lesbos of 90 Euro per adult, but we haven't received money yet since we moved. And there is no catering here. My husband needs to get an operation for his eyes.*

***We escaped from hell in Syria and now we are in nowhere. I don't trust life here. But we have no choice... ."***

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ARWA R.\* (27)

**7.** Arwa R.\* (27) lives in Koutsochero with her 6-year-old boy. The Kurdish Syrian has applied to reunify with her husband in Germany. She arrived in Greece in February 2018.

*"When we arrived in Greece we got arrested. They brought us to a closed camp [Fylakio] where we stayed for 15 days. We were released with a white paper for six months but we said we wanted to apply for asylum. I registered my asylum then in Thessaloniki, in March 2018.*

*In Koutsochero, I live in the old side of the camp ... (where) the containers have all just one room. In the new side they have two rooms, but there are also containers that two families have to share.*

***As a lone mother I feel afraid when the men are getting drunk and when they fight. Once they burnt some containers down. This is not a life here. I feel that at any time a stranger could enter my container. Every moment I feel fear. Fear of the other next door, who I don't know. Fear from all these single men living around us. I feel afraid for the health of my son who is ill and we are far from the hospitals. I feel afraid to get stuck here."***

By the end of February 2019, Arwa was desperate. She told us that her family reunification has not yet been sent to the German authorities. She still suffers from the camp's conditions:

*"Sometimes it is very calm, sometimes there are screams and noises. Then I just lock the door and wait. Nothing changed. My son is still ill. .... I tell you what I feel every night before I sleep. My feeling is being scared, being alone, hugging my son with my blanket in one room where there is no security, no people to solve problems, and I am missing my husband."*

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FILIPPIADA

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BAHA R.\* (40) AND AMIR K.\* (50)

**8.** Baha R.\* (40) and her husband Amir K.\* (50)<sup>xxxxi</sup> escaped from Iran with their son aged 16 and daughter aged 11. Amir is reportedly a victim of torture. He suffers from mental health issues and other health problems. Both children also have health problems. The family arrived from the land border with Serbia and got sent first from Diavata to Vaghiochori and from there to Filippiada camp. They had been in Greece for a month when they spoke to RSA at the end of last August.

Baha said: **"In Diavata they told us to go to Vaghiochori camp on our own. For two nights, we slept on the floor of a stone building in Diavata. There were fights in the food lines and the toilets. Our children suffered from vomiting as a result of bad food and developed skin allergies. We couldn't get the Cash-card and had no money. We spent almost our last money to go to Vaghiochori.**

In Vaghiochori, we stayed for three weeks in a tent. Our son got sick there. He had a microbic skin infection all over his body and was transferred to the hospital. We felt we were in the end of the world. I was very scared because of the psychology of my husband and my children's health. The bus to Thessaloniki was running once a day. One day they told us we should go to Filippiada camp on our own. We were two families, but they gave us money just for two tickets.

We have been in Filippiada for some days now. We share one container with another family. We have big problems with the doctors here. There is no Farsi interpreter – just one for Arabic. When I try to tell them our problems, they just laugh... My children still have a skin infection. I went four times to ask for medical assistance and I never got medicines... .

**We feel abandoned and unsafe here. We get sick but also there are fights even with knives. We escaped from violence. My husband was tortured in Iran. He had already six operations in his eyes. He needs very specific eye drops. The doctor said we have to buy them ourselves. We don't know even which eye drops he has to take. In Iran, the doctors had first told him he needed eye prosthesis, but then his condition improved... . Now his eye is getting worse again.**

... When my son had to be transferred to hospital for his infection, the ambulance took him to Arta. There was no dermatologist that day. We were then told we had to go back on our own and find our way to Ioannina hospital. ... We are spending nearly all our money for medicines and transport to the hospitals. What will happen if one of us has an emergency case? ..."

Eventually the family's asylum interview was scheduled for October 2019. In a phone call in early 2019, Baha said: "... We have a huge problem that we don't have enough money... . We have not bought any new clothes since we arrived. I feel ashamed for my children. At the end of the month, we always stay hungry for a week. With 400 Euros we cannot manage our lives. ...

**I am the one in the family who has to be strong and take care of all the others. But I suffer also and sometimes I ask myself how long will I be able to cope and not break down? My daughter, my son my husband... all are sick. I fear for (their health problems) and the distance to (the hospital). We applied for a house a month ago. We asked them to send us to a big city where my husband can find appropriate care. But we have nothing in our hand to prove he is a victim of torture."**

Since the family arrived in Greece, Amir has not been referred to any specialised organisation for the rehabilitation and certification of torture victims. He was told at an early point, that there are only such services in Athens, but the family at that time was new in Greece and was scared to go to the capital as they had nowhere to stay and no assistance.

## FACHNAZ K.\* (30) AND HER HUSBAND MEZGID M.\* (35)

9. Fachnaz K.\* (30) and her husband Mezgid M.\* (35)<sup>cxviii</sup> escaped from Aleppo in Syria with their four children aged 10, 8, 6 and 4. They arrived in Greece through Evros in April 2018 and spent two months in a tent in Diavata camp before being transferred to Filippiada.

Fachnaz described their difficult experiences to at the end of August 2018: "We arrived two months and ten days ago in Greece. We got arrested and detained for three days. Upon release, we received a paper valid for 6 months. We went to Thessaloniki and from there to Diavata camp. We bought a small tent and stayed there for two months with non-stop strong rainfalls. We were getting wet, getting wet, getting wet. All our children were sick.

**We have been in Filippiada for three months. We are waiting for our asylum interview in Thessaloniki. Everyone has to pay for his/her transport to the Asylum Service for the day of the interview. The tickets cost 55 Euro per person. For one family who gets 500 Euro in one month, this is really a lot. In May 2018, we got our Cash-card. It is not enough for my family. We were without cash for three months in Diavata.**

I have mental health problems, but there is no psychologist here. Also, the doctor here is not helping us. My husband was tortured in Syria. I saw beheaded persons and people torn into pieces in Aleppo. Our biggest problem here are the doctors at the moment. ... **(Also) we cannot give anything to our children. They will go to school after the summer. They have nothing to do since we are here, just a few lessons inside the camp. But there is no possibility for them to see something else than containers and trees.**

Recently there was a big fight with knives. How should we protect them here? During the fight we escaped outside of the camp and hugged our children tight until it was over. That night we slept outside of the camp from fear. They built a playground for the children now inside the camp, but we are scared to go there or to let our children go there. The camp is very dark during the night.

**We are living far from everything now. We live and we are not. There is the forest and mountains around us. The ambulance needs two hours to come here. I cannot imagine my future anymore. I just feel stress... ."**

## VAGHIOCHORI

### FATIMA G.\* (30) AND AHMAD\* (31)

10. Fatima G.\* (30), her husband Ahmad\* (31)<sup>cxviii</sup> and their two children aged 3 and 1 are from Deir Ezzor, Syria. They arrived in Greece through the land border with Turkey last July and went directly to Thessaloniki where they registered at a police station. They were given a suspension of deportation order valid for six months. Fatima is a lawyer and Ahmad an engineer. Following their registration, they were told to go to Vaghiochori camp to find shelter.

RSA met with them three weeks after their arrival in Greece. They said that they were subjected to three push-backs in the months before they managed to enter Greece.

Fatima reports of their situation: "We all live in tents. There are many families with children like us, but also around 20 single men. The ones who are brought here from the islands are taken within two weeks to other camps or to flats. They already applied for asylum before coming here. There are many who applied for family reunification and many sick persons or pregnant women.

We suffer from the living conditions here and ... we still wait for the answer by the Ministry of Migration to take us to a better place. There are very limited services. All the people who come from the islands have Cash-Cards. But we don't have. We depend on the catering, which brings food twice a day. People who are not yet registered in the camp also get no catering.

**We suffer from the heat. The toilettes are all placed at one point of the camp. They are filthy and far from our tent, so I am scared to go alone or leave our children on their own. There is no hot water. But sewage water runs to the tents nearby. There is nothing we could do here. We have to sleep at 9 pm when it gets dark. There are snakes and rats. ... We have to cook on a fire. The children play in the dirt all day. I have to boil water on a fire to bathe them. There is no safety. At night, we cannot see. There is no light in the bathrooms. Our three-year-old is still in shock since we were shot at when we passed the Syrian-Turkish border. He is not speaking at all because of the stress but there is no one to help us for that problem here... . Under these conditions, he will also not improve."**

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ALMA K.\* (26) AND MAHMOUD K.\* (36)

**11.** Alma K.\* (26) and her husband Mahmoud K.\* (36)<sup>xxxiv</sup> are from Afrin in Syria. They have four children aged 1, 4, 6 and 8. The family got transferred to Vaghiochori from Lesbos. Alma was four months pregnant at the time of the interview with RSA.

Alma described the serious difficulties the family was facing: "We arrived on Lesbos in July 2018. Our (asylum) interview appointment is for October 2020. The doctors there (on the island) found I was highly vulnerable due to the pregnancy and also because our daughter is ill. We were transferred within a month from the day of arrival. Our daughter has a serious medical problem and is in need of an operation. She suffers also from mental health issues. My husband has a problem with his liver. He got more ill on Lesbos and we were told our medical problems would get a good treatment as soon as we would be transferred to the mainland.

**From the first day we arrived here I am telling them about our medical problems, but nothing happened. The soldiers here are just telling us to have patience. Then one day at the end of August the heartbeat of our baby was very low. They called an ambulance. I wanted my husband to go with me. I didn't know I had to return from Thessaloniki all by myself. I called my husband and I was crying. He had to stay in the camp because of our kids. In the hospital they said I should return another day for a second appointment. ...The interpreter in the hospital showed me on the phone the way I had to take back. I don't speak English. It was 8pm and the latest bus had left two hours earlier. I didn't know what to do. My husband couldn't help me also. He was trying to find help in the camp, but no one was listening to him. He cut his arms in front of them. In the end, he sent me the address of the camp and I had to take a taxi. It (cost) 90 Euro.... We get 410 Euro per month for all our family.**

*I cannot move around alone in the dark, because I am scared. People here are just waiting again to be brought somewhere better. But we feel no hope any more. We are far from life here. I want my children to go to school and learn something nice. We are left alone in nowhere land and no one is allowed to come to us and help. I feel my life has finished. I feel like I died."*

In mid-September 2018 - after two weeks in Vaghiochori - the family got transferred to Filippiada camp. There, they felt it was even worse for their children because they never felt safe as there were more fights. Their biggest worry was that their daughter had not had yet an appointment for her operation. Being moved around from one marginalised camp to another made it more difficult for her to receive appropriate treatment. Transport to the hospitals, lack of interpreters and expenses for medicines created further obstacles. After their baby was born, the family was finally transferred to a flat.

Alma said: "On the one side we feel safer now in our own flat, as we are protected from bad people and wild animals. At the same time, we feel also unsafe as we are left to survive and start a life without anything in our hands. We don't know the language, the place and the system of life here".

## Footnotes

- <sup>i</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179> (last visited: 08.05.2019)
- <sup>ii</sup> In seven cases the families / individuals had arrived from the land borders to Greece and in 21 from the Aegean islands. RSA researchers interviewed 12 Syrians, 11 Afghans, 2 Iranians, 2 Congolese and one refugee from Iraq.
- <sup>iii</sup> Interviews were taken on 25-30 August 2018 in Thessaloniki and in front of the camps of Vaghiochori, Diavata, Nea Kavala, Koutsochero and Filippiada. RSA had conducted field-trips to the camps of the region also in April and September 2017. The people interviewed were contacted again by telephone in 1-3 March 2019 for an update on their situation. Two of the interviewees could not be contacted again. In seven cases the interviewees had left Greece after August 2018 as soon as they had got their travel documents or after being informed that they would have to leave the camps by end of March 2019.
- <sup>iv</sup> In the spring of 2018, RSA spoke with refugees residing in four camps in the regions of Attica and Voiotia. See: Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) 13.08.2018: Reception Crisis in Greece: The Malignancy of Atticas' Refugee Camps. Source: [https://rsaegrean.org/en/reception-crisis-in-greece/#\\_edn64](https://rsaegrean.org/en/reception-crisis-in-greece/#_edn64) (last visited: 3 March 2019)
- In 2016 RSA conducted research on the situation of vulnerable refugees in the camps of Attica. See: RSPA / PRO ASYL 2016: *Vulnerable Lives on Hold*. Refugees are hardly surviving the mass camps in the Athens Region. Source: <https://www.proasyl.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2016-05-24-Vulnerable-lives-on-Hold-final.pdf> (last visited: 3 March 2019)
- <sup>v</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68057> (last visited: 3 March 2019)
- <sup>vi</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>vii</sup> 25,000 stayed in apartments or buildings by UNHCR, 11,500 lived in the five Aegean Island hotspots, around 6,000 were hosted by an emergency shelter program of IOM mainly in hotels, 2,000 were hosted in flats rented by a program of Ministry of Migration, 2,000 minors stayed in facilities of the Ministry of Social Solidarity. Sources: [http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal\\_content/56\\_INSTANCE\\_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/61311?back=press-release](http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/61311?back=press-release) (last visited: 8 April 2019); [http://www.immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko\\_leukoma\\_prosfyges\\_engl.pdf/cac1526e-ca6a-4863-818e-4e0aed574276](http://www.immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko_leukoma_prosfyges_engl.pdf/cac1526e-ca6a-4863-818e-4e0aed574276) (last visited: 8 April 2019); Statistics for 28 February 2019. <http://mindigital.gr/index.php/προσφυγικό-ζήτημα-refugee-crisis/3640-national-situational-picture-regarding-the-islands-at-eastern-aegean-sea-28-02-2019> (last visited 8 April 2019); See also statement by Minister Vitsas at the end of March 2019: [http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal\\_content/56\\_INSTANCE\\_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/61311?back=press-releases](http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/61311?back=press-releases) (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>viii</sup> Source: [http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal\\_content/56\\_INSTANCE\\_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/58949?back=press-release](http://www.immigration.gov.gr/article-details/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_qAPKIk32D3aH/20182/58949?back=press-release) (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>ix</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179> (last visited: 23 April 2019)
- <sup>x</sup> Joint Ministerial Decision 3/5262, "Establishment of the Open Facility for the hospitality of asylum seekers and persons belonging to vulnerable groups in Eleonas Attica Region", 18 September 2015, Gov. Official Gazette B2065/18.09.2015 and Joint Ministerial Decision 3.2/6008 "Establishment of the Open Facility for the temporary reception of applicant of international protection", 18 September 2015, Gov. Official Gazette B' 1940/6.06.2017.
- Source: [https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ\\_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf](https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf) (last visited 8 April 2019); [https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ\\_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf](https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf) (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xi</sup> Joint Ministerial Decision 3/14762, "Establishment of Open Facilities for the Temporary Hospitality of applicant for international protection", Gov. Gazette B' 3720/16.11.2016.
- Source: [https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ\\_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf](https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf) [https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ\\_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf](https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ_Ιούνιος%202018.pdf) (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xii</sup> Greek term: *Δομές Προσωρινής Υποδοχής Αιτούντων Διεθνή Προστασία*. See: Article 10(3) L 4375/2016. According to the same Law, the government also has the option to open temporary accommodation facilities (*Δομές Προσωρινής Φιλοξενίας*) for persons subject to return procedures or whose return has been suspended (see: Article 10(4) L 4375/2016).
- <sup>xiii</sup> Annual internal reports of RSA about the living conditions in the camps of Northern Greece (unpublished)
- <sup>xiv</sup> Source: <https://rsaegrean.org/en/reception-crisis-in-greece/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xv</sup> 17.8.2017: <http://www.patrishnews.com/kathistiki-diamartyria-prosfygon-ke-metanaston-se-kentro-filoxenias-sta-diavata/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)



- 23./24.5.2018: <http://www.ekathimerini.com/228954/article/ekathimerini/news/migrants-protest-conditions-at-diavata-facility> (last visited: 8 April 2019);  
<https://www.thenationalherald.com/202117/migrants-block-northern-greek-highway-in-2nd-day-of-protests/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
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<https://www.briefingnews.gr/ellada/diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-kentro-filoxenias-ton-diavaton>  
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- 3.10.2018:  
<https://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/826433/diamarturia-prosfugon-exo-apo-to-kentro-filoxenias-sta-diavata/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- 11.12.2018: <https://www.iefimerida.gr/news/464699/diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-kentro-filoxenias-sta-diavata> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
7. January 2019: <http://www.ekathimerini.com/236304/article/ekathimerini/news/refugees-protest-winter-living-conditions-in-greek-camp> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xvi</sup> 1. September 2016: <https://www.karfitsa.gr/poreia-prosfygon-sti-filippiada-foto/> (last visited 8 April 2019)
20. September 2016: [http://www.preveza-info.gr/mobile\\_node.php?id=26338](http://www.preveza-info.gr/mobile_node.php?id=26338) (last visited 8 April 2019);
27. October 2016: <https://www.zougla.gr/greece/article/eftasan-70-prosfuges-sti-filipiada-ke-arni8ikan-na-minoun-se-skinas> (last visited: 8 April 2019);
- <sup>xvii</sup> 12. April 2016: <https://hellasjournal.com/2016/04/arnounte-na-minoun-sto-kentro-filoxenias-koutsocherou-prosfuges-ke-metanastes/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
9. April 2016:  
<https://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/1091891/sunexizetai-i-diamarturia-prosfugon-stin-ethniki-odo-larisas-trikalon> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
10. April 2017: <http://www.trikalaidees.gr/%CE%BD%CE%AD%CE%B1-%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%81%CF%84%CF%85%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%B1%CF%80%CF%8C-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%82-%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%83%CF%86%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%B5%CF%82-%CF%80%CE%BF/> (last visited: 8 April 2019);
1. November 2017: <https://www.newsbomb.gr/ellada/news/story/833761/sygkentrosi-diamartyrias-prosfygon-stin-ethniki-odo-larisas-trikalon> (last visited: 8 April 2019);
18. June 2018: <http://tinealarissa.gr/index.php/2018/06/18/diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-koytsochero-ekleisan-tin-ethniki-odo/> (last visited: 8 April 2019);
4. / 9. July 2018:  
<http://patrastimes.gr/%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%BB%CE%AC%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%83%CF%86%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%B5%CF%82-%CE%AD%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BD-%CF%84%CE%BF-%CE%B4%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%BC%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC%CE%BB%CF%89%CE%BD/> (last visited: 8 April 2019);  
<http://www.ert.gr/perifereiakoi-stathmoi/larisa/nea-diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-koytsochero-ekleisan-ton-dromo/> (last visited: 8 April 2019);
24. October 2018: <https://www.oichalianews.gr/larisa/prosfuges-ekleisan-dromo-sto-koutsokhero.html> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xviii</sup> In one case a person's asylum claim was rejected and he awaits the appeal decision.
- <sup>xix</sup> Interviewed on 27<sup>th</sup> August in front of Diavata site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>xx</sup> Interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup> August in Polykastro and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>xxi</sup> The Reception and Identification Service is an independent agency under the Deputy Ministry of Migration Policy General Secretariat of Reception. The mission of the Reception and Identification Service is the effective management of third country nationals who cross the Greek borders without legal documents and/or procedures, under conditions that respect their dignity, by placing them in first reception procedures. RIS has been created by Law 3907/2011. Its organization and operation is according to the Presidential Decree No. 102/2012. See also: Joint Ministerial Decision No 2969/2015 (Gov. Gazette 2602/B/2-12-2015) and Law 4375/2016 (Gov. Gazette 51/A/3-4-2016).
- Sources: <http://bit.ly/2kKm2cu> (last visited 8 April 2019);  
<https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/index.php?lang=en> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xxii</sup> EODY is active in 28 camps in the frame of the operation „PHILOS I“, which is funded by the EU (AMIF Fund) since 28.3.2017. While funding was initially secured just until end of August 2018, the program got extended until October of the same year. Within PHILOS, they employed in this period: 5 epidemiologists, 1 general doctor, 1 pathologist, 7 paediatricians, 6 persons for general tasks, 38 midwives, 13 cultural mediators, 30 dental doctors and 1 coordinator.

On 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 a new tender for “PHILOS II” was published calling for a total of 1.576 job applications for a period of 18 months for the six First Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) and 28 camps in the mainland. The 655 announced vacancies include: General co-ordinators 7; Co-ordinators of hygiene services 7; field co-ordinators 46; general doctors 65; paediatricians 25; dental doctors 5; nurses or assistant nurses 88; midwives 56; psychologists 15; health supervisors 46; social workers 55; rescuers/ ambulance staff 36; intercultural mediators 127; The program envisages a medical team and a psycho-social team in each site. The medical teams are tasked the provision of primary health care, emergency health care, identification of vulnerable groups, referrals to secondary medical care and to the psycho-social team. The psycho-social team is tasked with an intake screening for mental health issues, referrals, and if needed evaluation, diagnosis, therapy and control, crisis management, suicide prevention program, transfer of people with mental health issues who cannot stay in the camp, evaluation of mental health for vulnerability assessment in the RICs, supervision of employees providing for psycho-social services.

Specifically, the vacancies announced for camps around mainland Greece and concern the camps of the current research are:

3rd YPE: Alexandria, Aghia Varvara, **Diavata**, Kato Milias, Kalochori, Sindos, Giannitsa: 1 general co-ordinator, 1 hygiene co-ordinator, 8 field co-ordinators, 9 doctors, 3 paediatricians, 1 psychologists, 1 dental doctors, 12 nurses, 9 midwives, 10 psychologists, 7 social workers, 18 interpreters, 4 rescuers, 8 health supervisors

4th YPE: Lagadikia, Loutra, Volvi, **Nea Kavala**, **Vaghiochori**, Serres, Drama, Kavala, RIC Evros: 1 general co-ordinator, 1 hygiene co-ordinator, 9 field co-ordinators, 9 doctors, 5 paediatricians, 2 psychologists, 1 dental doctors, 14 nurses, 10 midwives, 13 psychologists, 10 social workers, 20 interpreters, 6 rescuers, 9 health supervisors

5th YPE: Oinofyta, Ritsona, Thiva, **Koutsochero**, Thermopyles, Volos, Kipselochori, Trikala: 1 general co-ordinator, 1 hygiene co-ordinator, 10 field co-ordinators, 12 doctors, 4 paediatricians, 4 psychologists, 0 dental doctors, 14 nurses, 10 midwives, 11 psychologists, 9 social workers, 21 interpreters, 8 rescuers, 10 health supervisors.

6th YPE: Andravida, Filippiada, Doliana, Aghia Eleni, Katsikas: 1 general co-ordinator, 1 hygiene co-ordinator, 6 field co-ordinators, 5 doctors, 2 paediatricians, 1 psychologists, 0 dental doctors, 7 nurses, 6 midwives, 6 psychologists, 5 social workers, 8 interpreters, 6 rescuers, 6 health supervisors

Source: <https://philosgreece.eu/el/news/call-for-tenders/anakoinosi-apotelesmaton-28-3-2017> (last visited: 8 April 2019);

Source: [https://keelpno.gr/Portals/0/Αρχεία/Προκηρύξεις/2018\\_2/ΩΛΤΞ469ΗΜΛ-70Α.pdf](https://keelpno.gr/Portals/0/Αρχεία/Προκηρύξεις/2018_2/ΩΛΤΞ469ΗΜΛ-70Α.pdf) (last visited: 8 April 2019)

<sup>xxiii</sup> IOM is providing for site management services, protection as well as translation, non-formal education and capacity building in the sites in mainland Greece. It also involves in 10 safe zones, which are managed in co-operation with ARSIS and the Greek Council of Refugees. Source:

<https://greece.iom.int/el/improving-greek-reception-system-through-site-management-support-and-targeted-interventions-long> (last visited: 23 April 2019)

<sup>xxiv</sup> DRC is tasked with site managing activities, protection monitoring and individual legal aid. The latter consists of legal info sessions, individual legal counselling and individual legal representation. A special emphasis is given to vulnerable refugees. Furthermore, DRC involves with non-formal educational activities in the sites.

Sources: <https://drc.ngo/media/5240212/about-the-iom-greece-project.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019);

<https://drc.ngo/where-we-work/europe/greece> (last visited: 19 April 2019)

<sup>xxv</sup> ASB provided such assistance in partnership with ARSIS until the end of 2018. The legal assistance provided focused mainly on advice and not on representation before asylum bodies. Since 2019, the organization built its own protection team. The ASB within its current program is tasked with: SMS activities, ensuring protection and support of vulnerable groups and offering non-formal education opportunities.

Source: <http://asb.gr/asb-signs-agreement-with-iom/> (last visited: 10 March 2019)

<sup>xxvi</sup> Vaghiochori is an exceptional case, as IOM was not providing for legal aid there as of the end of August 2018.

<sup>xxvii</sup> The term White paper here refers to a police note, issued upon first arrest for irregular entry in Greece.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August near Filippiada site and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone..

<sup>xxix</sup> Source: UNHCR.

<sup>xxx</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August in front of Diavata camp.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup> August in Polykastro and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Letter, dated 11 February 2019. Some vulnerable groups such as women in the advanced stages of pregnancy will be temporarily exempted. Those refugees leaving their camp accommodation on the scheduled date would continue to be provided with cash assistance for an additional period of three months.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Source: <https://rsaegean.org/en/evictions-of-recognized-refugees-from-accommodation-will-lead-to-homelessness-and-destitution/> (last visited: 8 April 2019)

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Vaghiochori camp.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Interviewed on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August in front of Diavata site and on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Source: [http://www.immigration.gr/2018/05/blog-post\\_72.html](http://www.immigration.gr/2018/05/blog-post_72.html) (last visited: 8 April 2019)

- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Source: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/training8Rev1en.pdf> (last visited: 8 May 2019)
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> During 2019, the Greek Asylum Service registered the claims of 358 “victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of violence or exploitation and there were 380 pending cases. It also granted international protection status to 177 persons belonging to these vulnerable groups.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> METADRASI conducts the identification and certification of torture victims. There is also the Prometheus program for the rehabilitation of torture survivors implemented by the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) and the Babel Day Centre/Syn-eirimos in co-operation with the Medecins Sans Frontieres since 2014.
- Sources: <https://metadrasi.org/en/campaigns/certification-of-torture-victims/> (last visited: 08.05.2019); <https://babeldc.gr/τρομηθξας-ii-ενισχύοντας-την-αποκατ/> (last visited: 08.05.2019); <https://babeldc.gr/τρομηθξας-i-ταυτοποίηση-και-αποκατά/> (last visited: 08.05.2019)
- <sup>xl</sup> Source: <http://www.arsis.gr/upiresies-psychokoinwnikis-nomikis-upostirixsis-se-prosfyges/> (last visited: 08.05.2019).
- <sup>xli</sup> Joint Ministerial Decision 3/14762, “Establishment of Open Facilities for the Temporary Hospitality of applicants for international protection”, Gov. Gazette B’ 3720/16.11.2016.
- Source: <https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ%20Ιούλιος%202018.pdf> <https://www.firstreception.gov.gr/PRIImages/EditorImages/Ευρετήριο%20Νομοθεσίας%20ΥΠΥΤ%20Ιούλιος%202018.pdf> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xlii</sup> The ASB within the program is tasked: SMS activities, ensuring protection and support of vulnerable groups and offering non-formal education opportunities. Source: <http://asb.gr/asb-signs-agreement-with-iom/> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <sup>xliii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67420> (last visited: 8 May 2019)
- <sup>xliv</sup> Source: <https://www.dikaiologitika.gr/eidhseis/koinonia/166067/protipo-evropaiko-kamp-i-domi-filoksenias-prosfygon-sta-diavata> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>xlv</sup> Source: <https://www.dikaiologitika.gr/eidhseis/koinonia/166067/protipo-evropaiko-kamp-i-domi-filoksenias-prosfygon-sta-diavata> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>xlvii</sup> Source: <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/media/refugees/2019/gr/20190125.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>xlviii</sup> ibid
- <sup>xlix</sup> RSA research, August 2018.
- <sup>i</sup> ibid
- <sup>li</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69055> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <sup>lii</sup> 23.5.-24.5.2018: Around 200 refugees block highway for two days to protest about living conditions in a period where the number of residents was more than double the capacity. Sources:
- <http://www.ekathimerini.com/229012/article/ekathimerini/news/migrants-block-highway-to-protest-conditions-at-diavata-camp> (last visited: 10 March 2019);
- <http://www.ekathimerini.com/229001/article/ekathimerini/news/migrants-block-northern-greek-highway-in-2nd-day-of-protests> (last visited 10 March 2019);
- <https://www.lifo.gr/now/greece/193904/thessaloniki-diamartyria-prosfygon-gia-tis-synthikes-diaviosis-sti-domi-filoksenias-ton-diavaton> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <sup>liii</sup> According to the camp manager Mr. Simitopoulos, who talked to the local news after another protest last January: There were around 500 persons living in Diavata without access to prefabs. 220 were occupying containers of the Education Ministry, 50 were staying temporarily in a building and 100 in tents. Dozens were hosted in the prefabs of others during the night. The rest lived in tents they developed to wooden huts.
- Sources:
- 7.1.2019: Protest.
- <https://greekcitytimes.com/2019/01/08/migrants-protest-at-camp-in-thessaloniki-video/> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2019/01/07/two-injured-in-refugee-protest-at-diavata-camp/> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <http://www.ekathimerini.com/236304/article/ekathimerini/news/refugees-protest-winter-living-conditions-in-greek-camp> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/14401/winter-conditions-add-to-migrant-hardship-in-northern-greece> (last visited: 10 March 2019)
- 10.1.2019: Snow in Diavata people in tents. Source:
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=51&v=l0omdWKhJc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=51&v=l0omdWKhJc) (last visited: 10 March 2019);
- 13.1.2019: Snow. Source:
- <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2019/01/13/migrants-endure-squalor-freezing-temps-in-greek-migrant-camp-video/> (last visited: 10 March 2019);
- <sup>liv</sup> 17. August 2017. Source: <https://www.gettyimages.de/detail/nachrichtenfoto/refugees-are-protesting-in-diavata-camp-in-nachrichtenfoto/833678752> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lv</sup> 10.5.2018: Fight among 100 persons. Sources:

- <http://www.thestival.gr/society/police/item/381480-prin-ligo-epeisodia-sto-kentro-filoksenias-prosfygon-sta-diabata-thessalonikis> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 1.6.2018: Fight among 100 persons.
- <https://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/792890/agrio-xulo-metaxu-metanaston-sto-kedro-filoxenias-sta-diavata/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 5.10.18: A fight between 60 persons, ends in injury of Iraqi refugee.
- <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/10/05/iraqi-migrant-injured-in-thessalonikis-diavata-camp-video/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lvi</sup> Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/05/world/europe/greece-migrant-protest.html> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lvii</sup> Interviewed on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Diavata site and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Diavata site.
- <sup>lix</sup> Sources: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZW4npLi1Vyc> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfrF6g6JQyg> (last visited: 19 April 2019);
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLbOrKVUytU> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lx</sup> Source: <https://drc.ngo/where-we-work/europe/greece> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxi</sup> Source: <https://drc.ngo/media/5240212/about-the-iom-greece-project.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxii</sup> There was reportedly a service gap of one month between the change in service providers.
- <sup>lxiii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxiv</sup> The program had started in September 2017 with a focus on unaccompanied minors and separated children as well as other children. They were offering a child-friendly space with different activities. Furthermore, they were working on the prevention of GBV and awareness raising and supported individual cases with psycho-social and legal services. Source: <http://arsis.gr/drasis-ke-ipiresies/paremvasis-stous-katavlimous/sti-voria-ellada/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxv</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67420> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxvi</sup> The volunteers distribute dry food and vegetables, clothing items and other necessities. Three times a week they offer “games and fitness”, they provide for a bike rental service, a wood workshop, a laundry service, and sewing machines. Source: <https://www.drapenihavet.no/en/locations-2/northern-greece/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxvii</sup> The volunteers have created a „women friendly space with different activities, a child-friendly space for toddlers, English lessons, they run a social space with activities for adults and young people. Source: <http://weareherecentre.org/neakavala/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxviii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxix</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/47291> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxx</sup> Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/gr/2605-προκατασκευασμένα-στρώματα-αντί-ψύξης.html> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxi</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxiii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67419> (last visited: 8 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxiv</sup> Source: [http://immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko\\_leukoma\\_prosfyges\\_gr.pdf/ccf067ab-99ff-4de4-8e95-2696745f7d05](http://immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko_leukoma_prosfyges_gr.pdf/ccf067ab-99ff-4de4-8e95-2696745f7d05) (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxv</sup> Source: <https://www.makthes.gr/kleinei-amesa-to-kentro-filoxenias-sti-nea-kavala-181453> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxvi</sup> Source: <https://www.facebook.com/maritta.gudrun/posts/2348669792045845> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxvii</sup> Interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup> August in the village of Nea Kavala.
- <sup>lxxviii</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August in the village of Nea Kavala and on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>lxxix</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/47291> (last visited: 19 April 2019);
- see video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsGpeYx3Pi8> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxx</sup> Source: <http://newpost.gr/ellada/559820/mono-sto-newpost-sththkan-oi-oikiskoi-gia-filoksena-metanastwn-sto-koytsoxero-larisas-fwto> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxi</sup> Source: <http://www.ert.gr/perifereiakoi-stathmoi/larisa/paradothike-pros-chrisi-kentro-filoxenias-prosfygon-sto-koutsochero-larisas/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxii</sup> Source: <http://www.kosmoslarissa.gr/blog/larisa/erxontai-500-neoi-prosfyges-sto-koytsoxero-ayksanetai-o-arithmos> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxiii</sup> Source: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67419.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxiv</sup> Source: [http://immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko\\_leukoma\\_prosfyges\\_gr.pdf/ccf067ab-99ff-4de4-8e95-2696745f7d05](http://immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/31265/Fotografiko_leukoma_prosfyges_gr.pdf/ccf067ab-99ff-4de4-8e95-2696745f7d05) (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxv</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <sup>lxxxvi</sup> Sources: <https://drc.ngo/media/5240212/about-the-iom-greece-project.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- <https://drc.ngo/where-we-work/europe/greece> (last visited: 19 April 2019)



- Source: <https://drc.ngo/media/5240212/about-the-iom-greece-project.pdf> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67420> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 9.4.2016: 484 Syrians leave camp in protest. They get finally transferred to Alexandreia and Nea Kavala. Source: <http://patrastimes.gr/ελλάδα/πρόσφυγες-αρνούνται-να-κατέβουν-από-τ/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 10.04.2017: Refugees close the road Larisa-Trikala protesting against living conditions and fights between ethnic groups. Source: <http://www.trikalaidees.gr/%CE%BD%CE%AD%CE%B1-%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%81%CF%84%CF%85%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%B1%CF%80%CF%8C-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%82-%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%83%CF%86%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%B5%CF%82-%CF%80%CE%BF/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 12.4.16: 382 newly arriving Syrians coming from Nea Karvali Kavalas rejected exiting busses. Source: <http://patrastimes.gr/ελλάδα/πρόσφυγες-αρνούνται-να-κατέβουν-από-τ/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 3.7.17: Protest as cash-cards not loaded. Source: <https://www.newsit.gr/topikes-eidhseis/larisa-diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-koytsoxero/2156350/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 4.7.-9.7.18: Protest closing highway due to disappearance of 12-year-old girl. Source: <https://trikalain.gr/prosfyges-ekleisan-kai-simera-to-dromo-trikalon-larissas-sto-koytsochero/> (last visited 19.04.19)
- 1.11.2017: Refugees close the road Larisa-Trikala as a protest asking free buses to Athens, as was the case in the past, under the responsibility of UNHCR. Source: <https://www.newsbomb.gr/ellada/news/story/833761/sygkentrosi-diamartyrias-prosfygon-stin-ethniki-odo-larissas-trikalon> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 18.06.2018: Refugees close the road Larisa-Trikala protesting against living conditions. Source: <http://tinealarissa.gr/index.php/2018/06/18/diamartyria-prosfygon-sto-koytsochero-ekleisan-tin-ethniki-odo/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 24.10.2018: Refugees close the road Trikala-Larisa as a protest and ask for better living conditions, improved facilities, better food, work and transportation to Larissa town. Source: <https://www.oichalianews.gr/larisa/prosfyges-ekleisan-dromo-sto-koutsokhero.html> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- 14.11.2018: Highway closed in protest. Source: <https://www.sportrikala.gr/2018/10/πρόσφυγες-π-άλι-απέκλεισαν-την-εθνική/> (last visited 19.04.2019)
- Interviewed on 29<sup>th</sup> August in front of Koutsochero site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- Interviewed on 29<sup>th</sup> August in front of Koutsochero site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- The ASB within the program is tasked: SMS activities, ensuring protection and support of vulnerable groups and offering non-formal education opportunities. Source: <http://asb.gr/asb-assumes-the-site-management-support-role-in-epirus-region/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- The contract was renewed in March 2019. Source: <http://asb.gr/asb-signs-agreement-with-iom/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- The program had started in September 2017 with a focus on unaccompanied minors and separated children as well as other children. They were offering a child-friendly space with different activities. Furthermore they were working on the prevention of GBV and awareness raising and supported individual cases with psycho-social and legal services. Source: <http://arsis.gr/drasis-ke-ipiresies/paremvasis-stous-katavlimous/sti-voria-ellada/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- Before, ARSIS had been present for psycho-social support since 1.6.2016-31.12.2017 in co-operation with former site manager OXFAM and in 2018 in co-operation with ASB.
- Source: <http://www.arsis.gr/en/emergency-support-to-refugees-and-migrants-in-greece-en/> (last visited: 19 April 2019)
- Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67420> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/47291> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/52748> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67419.pdf> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <https://www.atpreveza.gr/epikairothta/28160-megalonei-i-domi-filoksenias-prosfygon-sti-filippiada-gia-na-dexthei-kosmo-apo-tin-voreia-ellada> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <http://asb.gr/filipiada-prosfyges-kai-metanastes-samo-ftanoun-egkatastaseis-filoxenias/> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67419.pdf> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Source: <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/media/refugees/2019/gr/20190125.pdf> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- Tickets with the public buses to Ioannina cost around 7 Euro and to Arta 1,50 Euro oneway Tickets to Thessaloniki and Athens by public bus are one-way currently 34,30 and 36 Euro respectively.
- Interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August near Filippiada site and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.

- <sup>cviii</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August in front of Diavata site.
- <sup>cix</sup> Interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August near Filippiada site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cx</sup> Source: <https://www.iefimerida.gr/news/327067/sti-filippiada-70-prosfygopoyla-den-mporoy-na-pane-akoma-sholeio> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- In September 2016 parents of Greek kids in the school of Filippiada protested against the inclusion of refugee kids. Sources:
- <https://left.gr/news/i-apantisi-tis-6is-yg-perifereias-sti-ratsistiki-anakoinosi-goneon-toy-2oy-dimotikoy> (last visited: 08 May 2019);
- <https://left.gr/news/aroma-ratsismoy-kai-sti-filippiada-goneis-de-theloy-na-prosfygopoyla-sto-sholeio> (last visited: 08 May 2019);
- <https://www.liberal.gr/arthro/95620/epikairota/2016/anastelletai-i-foitisi-prosfugopoulon-stin-filippiada-logo-krousmaton-ipatitidas-a.html> (last visited: 08 May 2019);
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- <http://www.alterthess.gr/content/mataia-perimenoy-n-epi-4-mines-70-prosfygopoyla-na-pane-sholeio-sti-filippiada-logo> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxiii</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67419> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxiv</sup> Source: <https://www.voria.gr/index.php/article/ipes-sto-dimo-volvis-to-vagiochori-me-dikastiki-apofasi-tou-1961> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxv</sup> Source: <http://lagadasonline.gr/index.php/component/k2/item/1127-mesa-stin-evdomada-metaferontai-oi-prosfyges-sto-vagiochori> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxvi</sup> Source: <http://www.eleftherostypos.gr/ellada/69234-prosfyges-stin-thessaloniki-arnoynai-na-fygoyn-apa-to-xioni-kai-na-pane-se-xenodoxeia/#more-69234> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxvii</sup> Source: <https://www.life-events.gr/gegonota/trimini-paratasi-se-ergazomenous-sto-erimo-kab-prosfygon-sto-vagiochori-foto/> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxviii</sup> Source: <http://www.kathimerini.gr/1016560/article/epikairothta/ellada/ston-aera-h-xrhmatodothsh-gia-programmata-stegashs-kai-sitishs-prosfygwn> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxix</sup> Source: <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/media/refugees/2018/greek/20180914.pdf> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxix</sup> Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66038> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxix</sup> Source: <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/media/refugees/2018/greek/20180914.pdf> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxix</sup> Sources: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oxZ886IZ4Y> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
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- <sup>cxix</sup> Source: <https://www.iefimerida.gr/news/445855/volvi-grothia-sto-stomahi-oi-eikones-apo-tis-synthikes-diaviosis-ton-prosfygon-eikones> (last visited: 08 May 2019)
- <sup>cxixiii</sup> Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August in front of Vaghiochori site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixiv</sup> Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August in front of Vaghiochori site and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixv</sup> Interviewed on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Diavata camp and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixvi</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Diavata camp and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixvii</sup> Interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in Polykastro and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixviii</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in the village of Nea Kavala and on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixix</sup> Interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in the village of Nea Kavala and on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixx</sup> Interviewed on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Koutsochero camp.
- <sup>cxixxi</sup> Interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018 near Filippiada camp and on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixxii</sup> Interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018 near Filippiada camp and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.
- <sup>cxixxiii</sup> Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Vaghiochori camp.
- <sup>cxixxiv</sup> Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018 in front of Vaghiochori camp and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 by telephone.

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