

DEPORTATION AND IMMIGRATION DETENTION STATISTICS IN GREECE IN 2025

MARCH 2026

A constant practice of deprivation of refugees' liberty

Deportation and immigration detention statistics in Greece in 2025

A constant practice of deprivation of refugees' liberty



Returns & deportations

26,527 Hellenic Police decisions: **11,877** return decisions (Return Directive) and **14,650** deportation decisions (derogation from the Directive). Main nationalities are Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Albania and Sudan.

5,736 returns of third-country nationals, of which 3,638 concern nationals of Albania and Georgia, not represented in arrivals via Evros and the Mediterranean



Review of return & deportation orders

402 decisions challenged through an administrative appeal to the Hellenic Police (1.5%)

2.7% approval rate in appeals before the Hellenic Police



Immigration detention

25,497 Hellenic Police detention orders: **7,919** in return procedures; **14,601** in deportation procedures; and **2,977** in the asylum process

47,126 RIS "freedom restriction" orders, including **11,862** in RIC Malakasa

99.7% detention rate in deportation procedures

66.6% detention rate in return procedures



Judicial review of detention

3,878 orders challenged through objections before administrative courts (15.2%)

43.6% approval rate in objections before administrative courts

0.8% rate of detention orders quashed in *ex officio* review by the same courts based on the same provisions



Detention conditions

1,791 people detained in mainland pre-removal centres on 31 December 2025, of whom **634** in Amygdaleza, **323** in Corinth and **312** in Fylakio. Main countries include Egypt (627 detainees) and Afghanistan (305 detainees)

204 people detained in police stations as of 31 December 2025

This Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) note analyses the latest statistics on return, deportation and immigration detention in Greece for 2025, provided by the Greek authorities in reply to parliamentary questions.¹ For yet another year, the figures reveal a constant, arbitrary practice of imposing deprivation of liberty and deportation, even to countries where removal is neither permitted nor feasible. The data also demonstrate chronic dysfunctions in the review of legality of deportation and detention orders.

Registered arrivals in Greece

The Greek authorities registered a total of 48,298 people arriving in the country undocumented in 2025. Of those, 19,799 arrived on Crete and Gavdos via the Central Mediterranean, while another 28,499 arrived via Evros and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Screening is mandatory before such arrivals are channelled into asylum or return procedures.² The Reception and Identification Service (RIS) screened a total of 50,840 people in 2025. Almost all people entering screening procedures seek asylum.³

The main countries of origin of people screened by RIS were Afghanistan (13,471), Sudan (8,641) and Egypt (7,837).

Return procedures

The Hellenic Police issued a total of 26,527 decisions ordering removal from the Greek territory in 2025. Of those, 11,877 were return decisions based on L 5226/2025 transposing the Return Directive,⁴ and 14,650 were deportation orders pursuant to L 3386/2005,⁵ in derogation from Return Directive standards. Therefore, the majority of removal orders in Greece continue to be issued in derogation from the Return Directive.

As confirmed every year by official figures, the Hellenic Police systematically circumvents EU law through a blanket practice of deportation orders against newly arrived people who seek asylum and thereby have a right to remain on the territory. By way of illustration, the main countries of origin of people facing deportation proceedings in derogation from the Return Directive were by far Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and Sudan. The majority of nationals of these countries are granted refugee status in Greece.

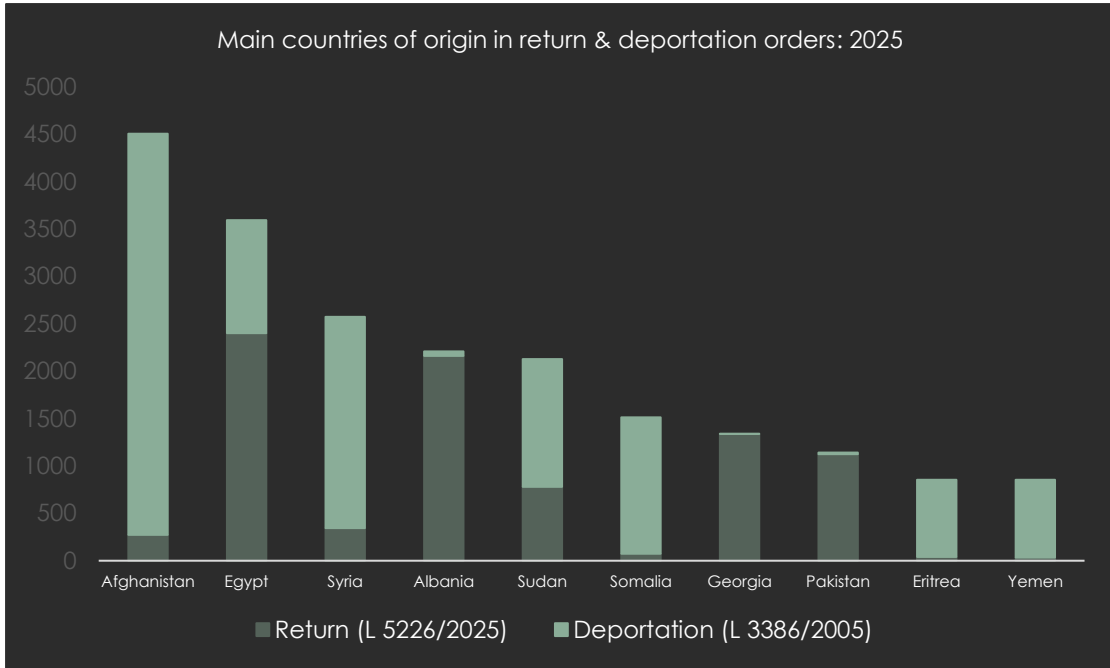
¹ Hellenic Parliament, *Στοιχεία διοικητικής κράτησης και απελάσεων μεταναστών και αιτούντων άσυλο 2025*, available [here](#).

² Article 38(1) Greek Asylum Code, L 4939/2022, Gov. Gazette A' 111/10.06.2022.

³ Hellenic Police Headquarters, Reply to parliamentary question, 7017/4/27283-στ', 1 April 2025, available [here](#); 7017/4/26888-γ', 13 August 2024, available [here](#).

⁴ Gov. Gazette A' 154/08.09.2025.

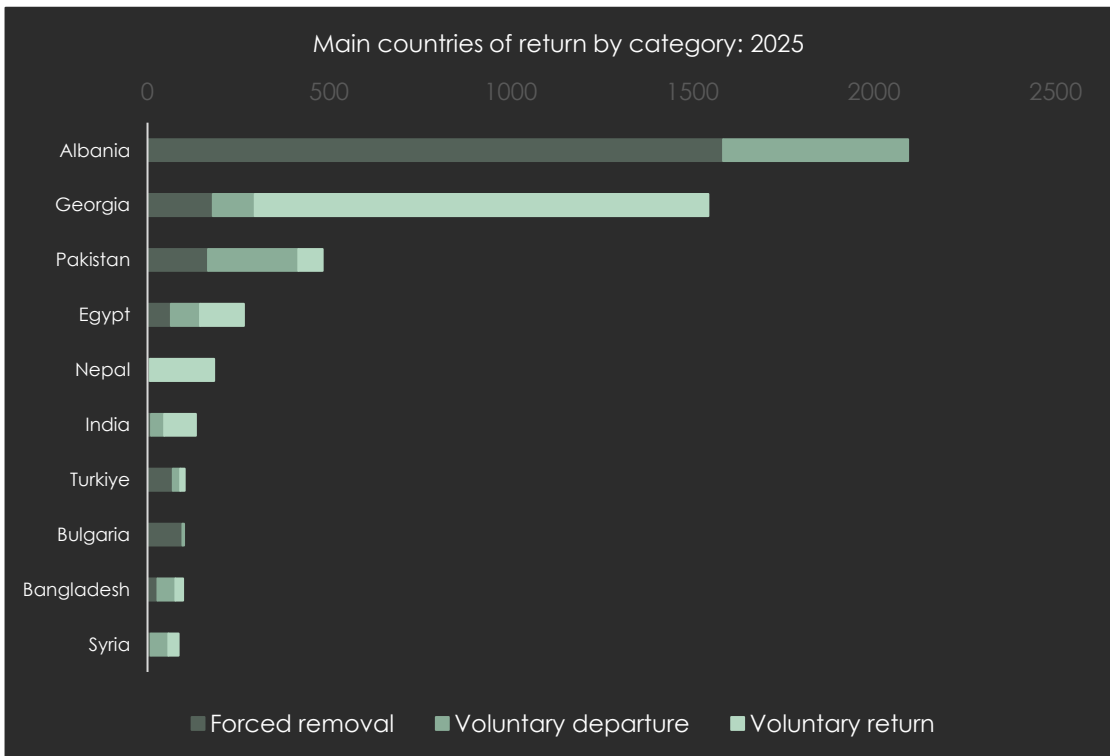
⁵ Gov. Gazette A' 212/23.08.2005.



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

Throughout the past year, Greece carried out a total of 5,736 returns and deportations. This represents a decrease from 5,865 in 2024 and 6,340 in 2023.

Of the 5,736 returns and deportations conducted in 2025, 2,464 were forced removals, 1,240 were voluntary departures within a set deadline following a return decision, and 2,032 were voluntary returns assisted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

Almost two out of three returns and deportations carried out in 2025 concern nationals of Albania (2,094) and Georgia (1,544) alone. These nationalities are not reflected in the aforementioned statistics on arrivals via Evros and the Eastern and Central Mediterranean. Most returns were forced in the case of Albania, and most were voluntary returns implemented via IOM in the case of Georgia.

Administrative appeal against the return or deportation order

Greek law states that deportation or return decisions issued by the Hellenic Police may be challenged through an administrative appeal before the Hellenic Police within a short deadline of five days. Greece still offers no free legal assistance for the exercise of this remedy, in flagrant and consistent breach of EU law.⁶ Even the people who were unlawfully subjected to a three-month ban on applying for asylum were not granted legal assistance to challenge the return decisions issued against them.⁷

Official statistics yet again demonstrate that access to the administrative appeal against deportation and return orders remains extremely limited. Out of 26,527 decisions taken in 2025 by the Hellenic Police, only 402 were appealed (1.5%).

The quality of review performed on appeal by the Hellenic Police is equally problematic. We continue to witness boilerplate decisions that do not assess or give due reasoning on the appellants' submissions. This consistent practice was also applied during the three-month asylum ban, where refugees' lawful and fundamental pleas to not be deported before having had the possibility to apply for asylum in Greece and to explain the reasons for seeking protection were dismissed by standardised Hellenic Police decisions. This led people to appeal before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) for protection against deportation.⁸

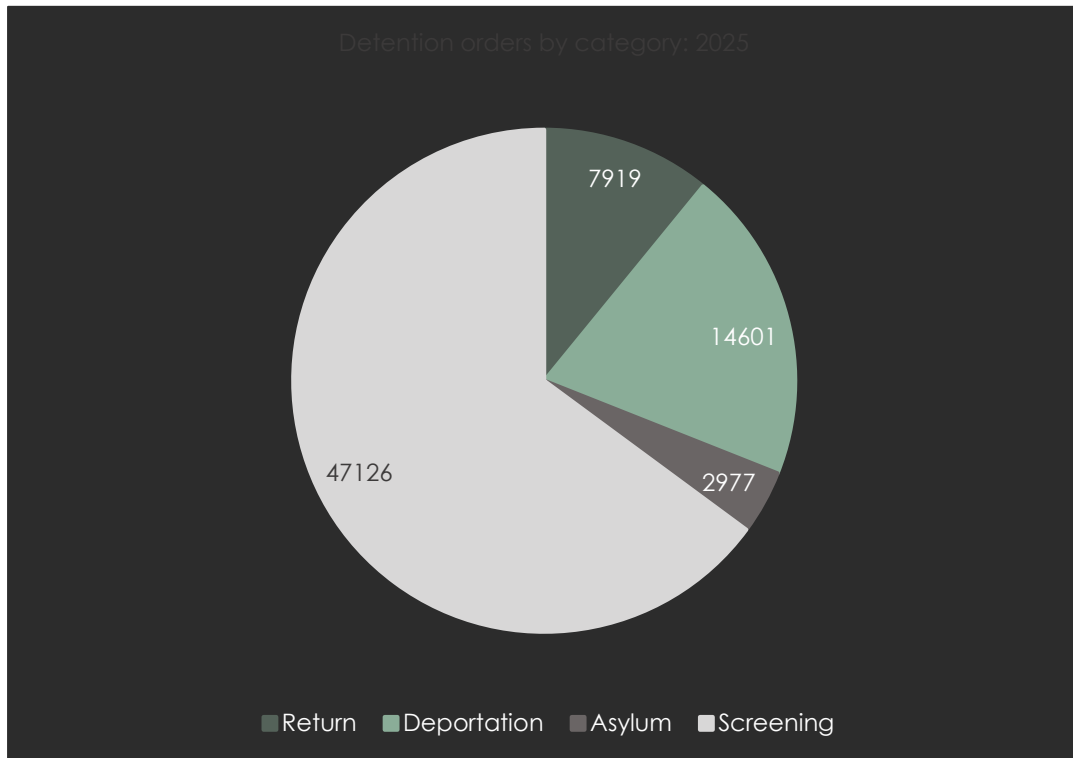
The Hellenic Police dismissed 391 and granted no more than 11 of the 402 administrative appeals it processed last year. This means that only 2.7% of the extremely few administrative appeals lodged in 2025 were accepted.

⁶ European Commission, *Report of the 2024 Revisit of Greece related to the serious deficiencies identified in 2021 in the field of return*, C(2025) 4342, 3 Ιουλίου 2025, Annex, 6, 8; Plenary of Greek Bar Associations, 'Μεταναστευτικό-Άσυλο: Η προσήλωση στη διεθνή και συνταγματική νομιμότητα αποτελεί μονόδρομο για κάθε ευνομούμενη δημοκρατική πολιτεία', 18 August 2025, available [here](#).

⁷ RSA, *Suspension of Asylum in Greece: Detention, Uncertainty, and Rights Violations*, 13 November 2025, available [here](#).

⁸ RSA, 'ECtHR puts a stop sign to Greek deportation without prior assessment', 22 September 2025, available [here](#).

Resort to immigration detention

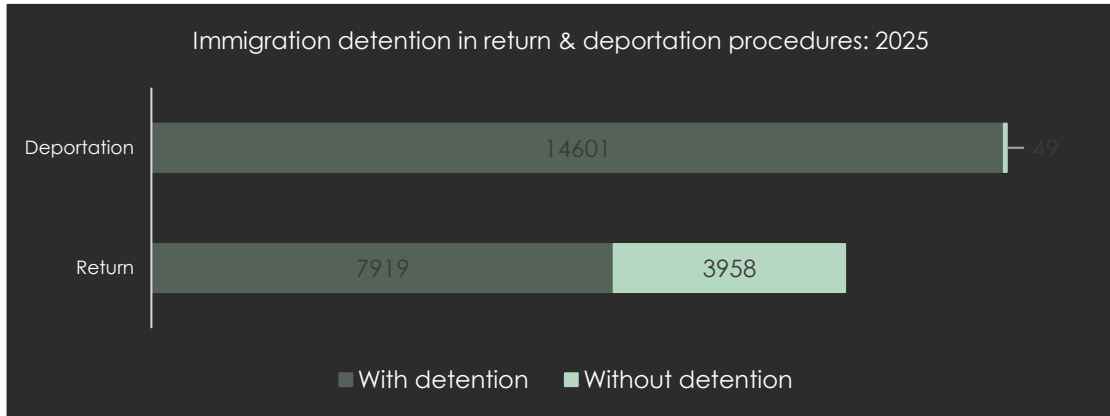


Sources: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026; Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 27 Feb 2026

Immigration detention in Greece is formally imposed by the Hellenic Police through detention orders. However, immigration detention also takes the form of “freedom restriction” orders issued automatically and indiscriminately by the RIS during screening procedures in Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) and Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCAC).⁹

The Hellenic Police issued 25,497 detention orders in 2025. This year too, pre-removal detention in removal proceedings was imposed systematically and not as a last resort, as required by international, EU and domestic law. In fact, detention is an almost automatic adjunct of deportation orders in L 3386/2005 proceedings that derogate from Return Directive standards and are unlawfully and arbitrarily applied to refugees who seek and obtain asylum in Greece. 99.7% of deportation decisions were accompanied by a detention order, whereas 66.6% of return decisions pursuant to the Directive were coupled with detention.

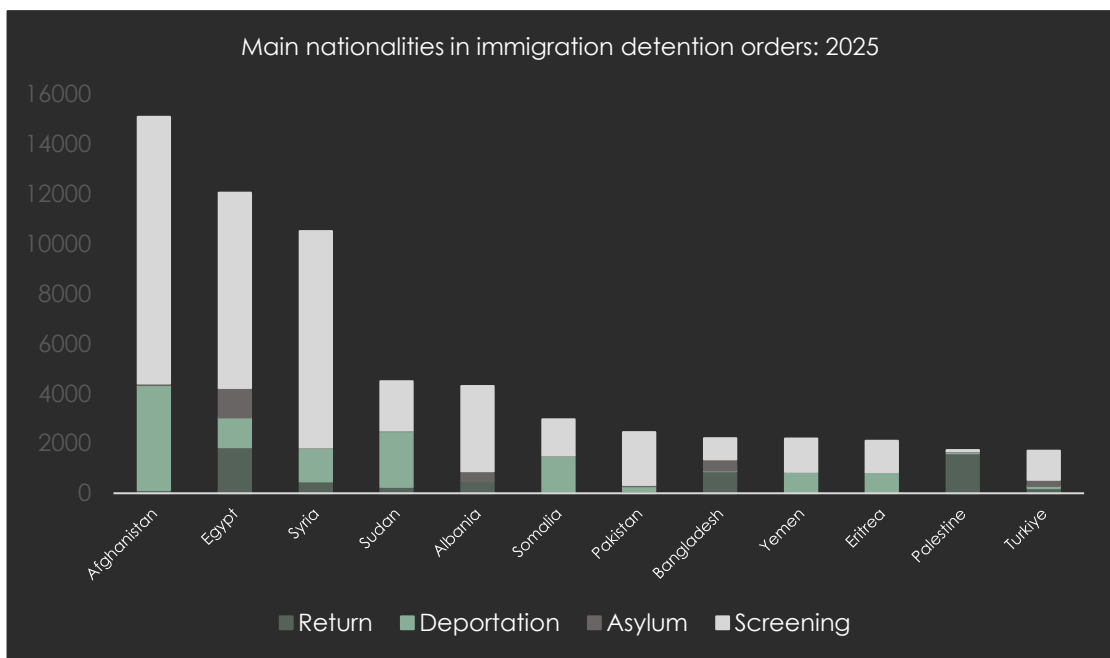
⁹ Article 40(a) Greek Asylum Code.



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

Detention with no prospect of removal

The main nationalities of people subject to immigration detention in 2025 were Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria and Sudan:



Sources: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026; Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 27 Feb 2026

Pre-removal detention is conditioned upon the existence of a reasonable prospect of removal from Greece, among other requirements. Yet, pre-removal detention was imposed on people from countries such as Afghanistan or Sudan, without any prospect of removal either to their countries of origin or to Türkiye. The Asylum Service maintains extremely high, near-100% recognition rates for these countries.

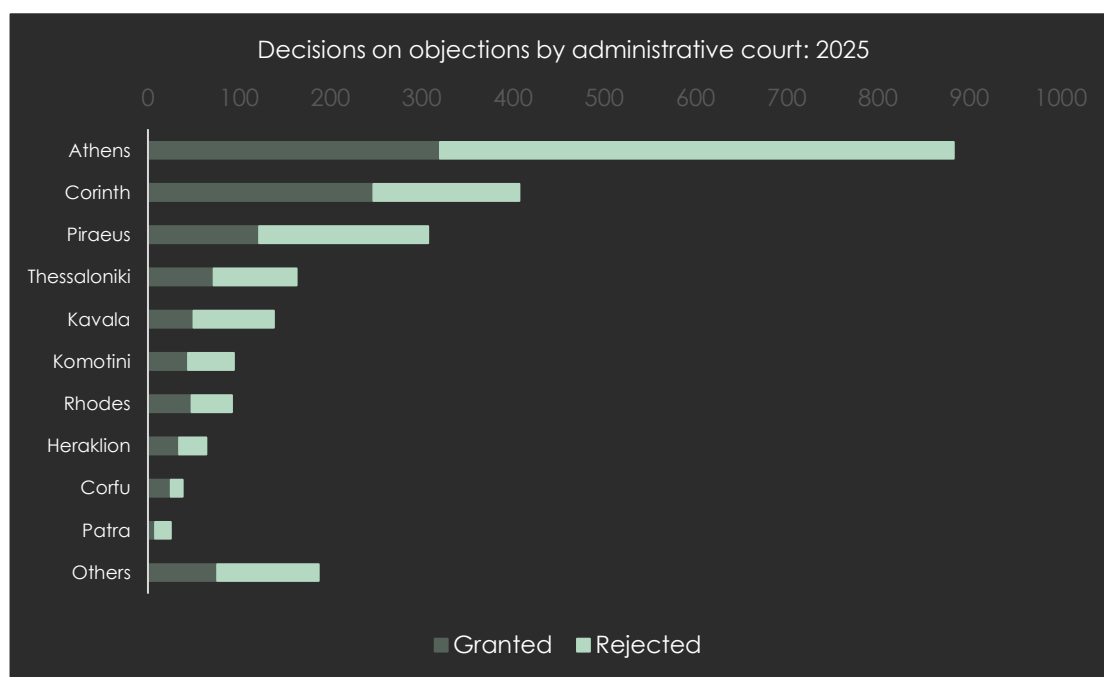
Judicial review of detention

3,878 objections against detention were lodged in 2025, corresponding to 15.2% of the total number of detention orders issued by the Hellenic Police – excluding RIS “freedom

restriction" orders. Accordingly, less than one in five Hellenic Police detention orders were challenged in court. Here too, the aforementioned obstacles to the accessibility of the administrative appeal against return and deportation decisions, coupled with the complete absence of free legal assistance, adversely affect the effectiveness of access to the objections remedy.

More than half of objections against detention in Greece were lodged before the Administrative Court of Athens (2,192), far ahead of the Administrative Courts of Corinth (540), Piraeus (323) and Thessaloniki (164).

The administrative courts granted 43.6% of objections against detention examined on the merits in 2025:



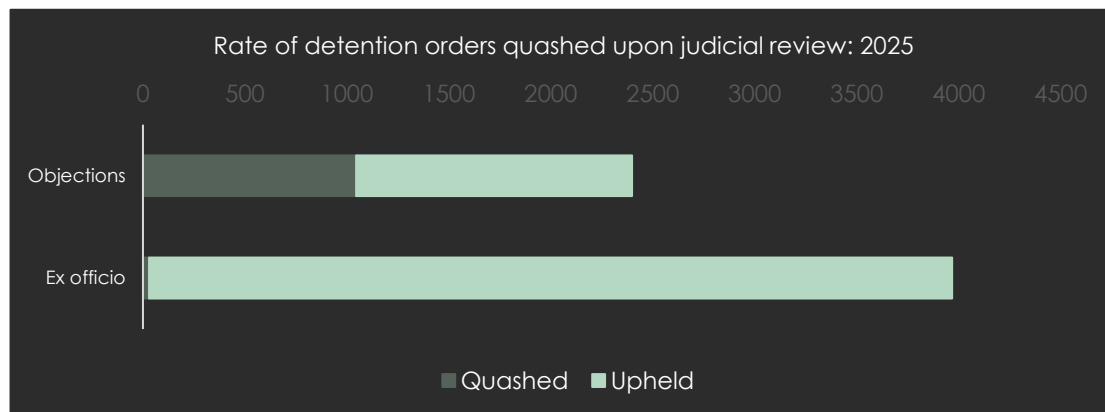
Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 2 Mar 2026

Serious disparities still persist between judicial review of detention in objections and *ex officio* judicial review of extensions of detention orders based on domestic asylum and return legislation, even though they relate to the very same provisions and are conducted by the same courts.

	Asylum (L 4939/2022)		Return (L 5226/2025)		Quashed percentage
	Quashed	Upheld	Quashed	Upheld	
Corinth	2	1,084	0	0	0.2%
Kavala	4	564	0	226	0.5%
Serres	0	563	0	0	0%
Athens	1	347	12	411	1.7%
Others	7	470	4	274	1.5%
Total	14	3,028	16	911	0.8%

Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 2 Mar 2026

Extreme discrepancies in the in the workings of available mechanisms of judicial review of detention are now a systematic phenomenon in Greece. The administrative courts quashed more than two out of five detention orders challenged before them through objections, yet found less than 1% of orders they reviewed *ex officio* to be unlawful.



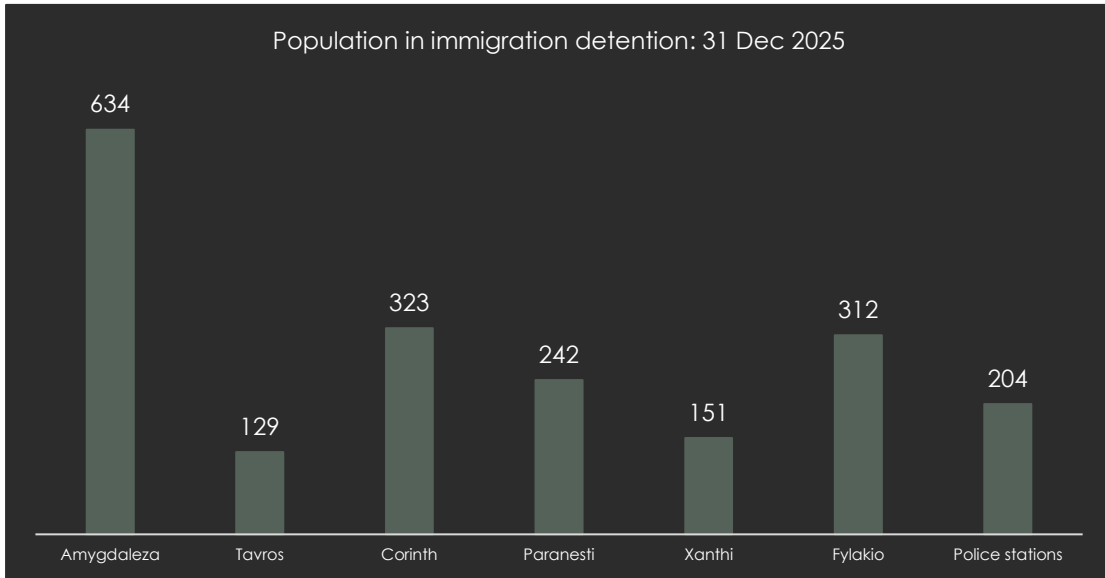
Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 2 Mar 2026

We highlight yet again the pressing need for free legal assistance to people subject to immigration detention and for an in-depth evaluation of the manifestly ineffective *ex officio* review of detention by the courts.

Detention conditions

1,995 people were held in immigration detention at the end of 2025. Of those, 1,971 were detained in six pre-removal detention centres (PRDC) in mainland Greece,¹⁰ and another 204 were detained in police stations throughout the country. These numbers represent an increase compared to the number of people detained in PRDC and police stations at the end of 2024.

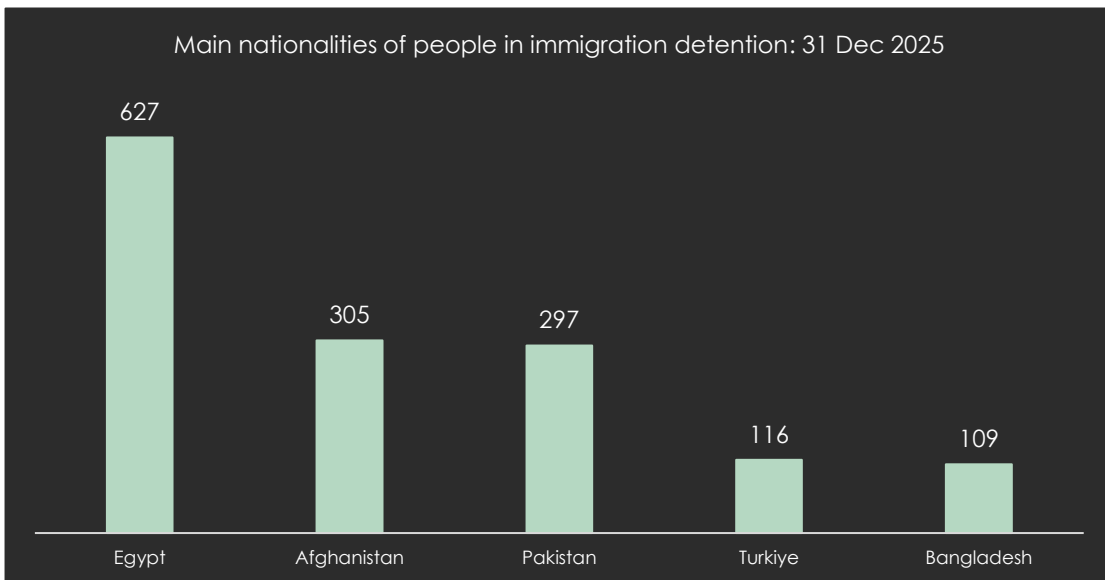
¹⁰ Hellenic Police statistics do not mention the number of people detained in the PRDC Kos operating within CCAC Kos or in the Special Detention Facility operating inside the Controlled Temporary Reception Centre (CTRC) of Sintiki.



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

Egypt (627) was the main country of origin of people in detention at the end of 2025, mainly in Amygdaleza (306). The second main country of origin was Afghanistan, whose nationals were predominantly held in Fylakio (243).

The top five countries of origin of people in immigration detention at the end of 2025 includes Türkiye.



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

Data provided in reply to parliamentary questions refer to deployment of Health Units SA (Ανώνυμη Εταιρία Μονάδων Υγείας, AEMY) personnel in the pre-removal detention centres at the end of 2025 as follows:

AEMY staff by mainland pre-removal centre: 31 Dec 2025						
Profile	Amygdaleza	Tavros	Corinth	Paranesti	Xanthi	Fylakio
Doctors	2	1	1	2	1	1
Nurses	4	2	2	2	2	2
Psychologists	2	1		1	1	1
Social workers	1	1	2	1	1	1
Interpreters	4	2	1	1	1	1
Health visitors	2	1		1	1	
Administrative staff	1	1	1	1	1	
Total	16	9	7	9	8	6

Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 16 Mar 2026

These figures show consistent, critical gaps in health care services for people subject to immigration detention in Greece.



<https://rsaegean.org/en/deportation-and-immigration-detention-statistics-in-greece-in-2025>



Refugee Support Aegean (RSA)

Iasona Kalampoka 30

82131 Chios, Greece

+30 22711 03721

info@rsaegean.org

<https://rsaegean.org>