

# EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK FOCUSSED STUDY 2017

## The changing influx of asylum seekers in 2014-2016: Member State responses



The study was prepared by the Working Group of the European Public Law Organization (EPLO).

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**EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK • FOCUSED STUDY 2017**  
**The changing influx of asylum seekers in 2014-2016: Member State responses**

The European Migration Network (EMN) was established in 2003, originally as a preparatory action of the European Commission, with the aim of providing the European Commission and the Member States with objective, reliable, comparable and up-to-date data on migration and asylum, to build policymaking in the European Union and hence their national policies in these areas. Subsequently, the Council of the EU in 2008, with the No. 381/2008/EK Judgment founded the EMN, as a permanent structure that will operate within the European Commission, with the participation of Member States in order to achieve these goals.

More information on the EMN and its work can be found on the website

[www.emn.europa.eu](http://www.emn.europa.eu)

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## EMN FOCUSSED STUDY 2017

### The changing influx of asylum seekers in 2014-2016: Member State responses

#### Top-line “Factsheet” (National Contribution)

##### National contribution (one page only)

*Overview of the National Contribution – introducing the study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections of the Focussed Study, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policymakers.*

The Focussed Study of the European Migration Network for the year 2017 “The changing influx of asylum seekers in 2014-2016: Member State responses” aims to inform both the Member States and the European Commission and the public on developments in policies in Greece within the 2014-2016 period for managing the changing influx of asylum seekers. The Focussed Study consists of **seven sections**. The aim of **Section 1** is to provide an overview of the national situation from the beginning of 2015. Greece is the main entry point in Europe for almost a million refugees and migrants seeking security for themselves and their families. The unprecedented refugee/migrant flows of 2015 coupled with the movement of the migratory route that comes to Greece from Turkey has put an enormous test on Greece’s already overstressed asylum system and has illuminated the weaknesses and difficulties of handling the dramatic rise of migrants and refugees and the coverage of their humanitarian needs. This section presents an overview of the legislative changes and policies introduced to address or manage variations in the number of asylum applications and to better control migratory flows over the period 2014-2016. In October 2015, Greece presented a Roadmap to the EU Council on its plan for the implementation of hotspots. In January 2016, the government announced that the hotspots on the islands of Lesbos (extension to pre-existing center), Leros, Chios and Samos will be completed in the Spring of 2016. Law 4375/2016 entered into force in April 2016, amid discussions and estimations about the legal reforms needed to implement the EU-Turkey Statement of March 18, 2016 along with other relevant laws, presidential decrees and decisions. The section emphasizes the key role of the Asylum Service and the Reception and Identification Service. The aim of **Section 2** is to analyze the measures taken, their impact, and the response to the changing inflows in Greece, which has experienced a very large influx of asylum seekers. This analysis includes issues regarding border access, reception/accommodation and other housing arrangements, wider reception services (social services, health services), rights granted to applicants, asylum seeker registration procedure, asylum procedure (first and second degree), infrastructure, competence of authorities, enforcement of law, and measures for the integration of asylum seekers. The objective of **Section 3** is to examine the effectiveness of the measures taken. Mobile Units and also the operation of hotspots have been under significant pressure and Reception Structures and Hospitality Centres have been particularly overloaded. Emphasis has been placed on the process of pre-recording (immigrant/refugee) populations that remained in the country after February 2016 –when the northern borders were sealed– although their original intention was to depart. These populations were “mapped” and their management was organized and further issues were arranged (i.e. relocation, family reunification, or granting asylum procedures in Greece, to those entitled to such status). The purpose of **Section 4** is to investigate the financing of the measures, other resources, and the administrative burden. The national measures implemented are funded by European and National Resources. Apart from the reception, identification, and asylum services, the management of the large volume of refugee flows in Greece involves the services of the Regions, the Municipalities, the Hellenic Coast Guard, the Hellenic Police, the hospitals, central government, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, foundations, institutions, and voluntary organizations. The work of the aforementioned bodies includes actions and services with very high administrative and organizational requirements due to the enormous intensity of the workload compared to local communities and infrastructures. Additionally, high budget costs such as the costs for the formation of new reception infrastructures, expenditures on basic hospitality and subsistence benefits (food, water, etc.), infrastructure maintenance costs, operating costs of all the aforementioned activities, costs for medical care and hospitalization of incoming populations, and other costs, present difficulties, while the state is in a deep economic recession. The purpose of **Section 5** is to examine how the experience gained between 2014-2016 helped the government (national, regional, local) to prepare for any future change in the inflow of asylum applications, such as in 2017. The 2014-2016 experience significantly contributed to preparing the government for any changes in asylum applications at the local, regional and national level. First of all, a separate Ministry for Migration Policy was created, as well as the General Secretariat for Migration Policy and the General Secretariat of Reception. Both the Reception and Identification Service and the Asylum Service have been significantly strengthened in personnel, logistics and know-how. With Law 4375/2016, as amended by Law 4399/2016, the new Appeals Authority is established as an independent Service. The purpose of **Section 6** is to outline good practices in ensuring the flexibility and adaptability of the national asylum system and related services to a changing influx of asylum seekers. With regard to the functioning of the Asylum Service, the pre-registration process has been a good example of good practice and flexibility by the public sector with UNHCR and EASO. Finally, the objective of **Section 7** is to draw conclusions on the change in the flow of asylum seekers 2014-2016.

### Section 1: Overview of national context

This section will briefly outline the developments in Member State policies adopted in the timeframe 2014-2016 to manage a changing influx of asylum applicants. NCPs are welcomed to add background information needed to provide a complete overview of the developments in their Member State during this period (e.g. existing asylum influx for 2009-2013 and/or organisational information of Asylum and Migration Policies).

Please note that information about actual measures taken (structural or ad-hoc) are covered in Section 2 instead.

#### Q1. Brief overview of legislative changes and policies announced and/or introduced to address or manage fluctuations in the number of asylum applications or better control of migration flows over 2014-2016.

Please specify when these changes happened and what the goal of each change introduced) was.

Since the beginning of 2015, Greece has been the main entry point into Europe for almost one million refugees and migrants seeking safety for themselves and their families<sup>1</sup>. The unprecedented migratory flow of 2015 combined with a shift in the migration route coming to Greece from Turkey dramatically tested Greece's already overstretched asylum system and has brought to light weaknesses and difficulties in handling the dramatic rise of migrants and refugees and the coverage of their humanitarian needs.

- "The Asylum Regional Office of Attica, the largest in Greece, began its operation on June 7, 2013, while a total of 5 Regional Asylum Bodies and 3 Independent Asylum Units operated in 2014<sup>2</sup>".
- "In October 2015, Greece presented a Roadmap to the Council of the EU regarding its plan to implement the hotspots approach. In January 2016, the government announced that the hot-spot areas in the islands of Lesbos (extension to a pre-existing center), Leros, Chios, and Samos would be completed in Spring 2016. The Greek Army has been mobilized to ensure the hot spots are completed<sup>3</sup>".
- "On March 7, 2016, Turkey furthermore agreed to accept the rapid return of all migrants not in need of international protection crossing from Turkey into Greece and to take back all irregular migrants intercepted in Turkish waters. Turkey and the EU also agreed to continue stepping up measures against migrant smugglers and welcomed the establishment of the NATO activity on the Aegean Sea. At the same time Turkey and the EU recognize that further, swift and determined efforts are needed. In order to break the "business model" of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk, the EU and Turkey decided to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU. In order to achieve this goal, they agreed on the following additional action points: 1) All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands as of 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey; 2) For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU; 3) Turkey will take any necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for irregular migration opening from Turkey to the EU; 4) Once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU are ending or have been substantially reduced, a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme will be activated; 5) The fulfilment of the visa liberalisation roadmap will be accelerated with a view to lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens at the latest by the end of June 2016. Turkey will take all the necessary steps to fulfil the remaining requirements; 6) The EU will, in close cooperation with Turkey, further speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated €3 billion under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. Once these resources are about to be used in full, the EU will mobilise additional funding for the Facility up to an additional €3 billion to the end of 2018; 7) The EU and Turkey welcomed the ongoing work on the upgrading of the Customs Union. 8) The accession process will be re-energised, with Chapter 33 to be opened during the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union and preparatory work on the opening of other chapters to continue at an accelerated pace; 9) The EU and Turkey will work to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria<sup>4</sup>".
- "Under the EU-Turkey Statement irregular migrants may be held in closed reception centres on the Greek islands, subject to EU legislation – in particular the EU Return Directive<sup>5</sup>. Asylum seekers will be accommodated in open reception centres on the Greek islands. People who do not have a right to international protection will be immediately returned to Turkey. The legal framework for these returns is the bilateral readmission agreement between Greece and Turkey. From 1 June 2016, this will be succeeded by the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement, following the entry into force of the provisions on readmission of third country nationals of this agreement. People who apply for asylum in Greece will have their applications treated on a case-by-case basis, in line with EU and international law requirements and the principle of non-refoulement. There will be individual interviews, individual assessments and rights of appeal. There will be no blanket and no automatic returns of asylum seekers<sup>6</sup>".

<sup>1</sup> See: Voutsinou, M. et al. (2017). *Migration flows and refugee protection - Administrative challenges and human rights issues. Special Report*. Athens: The Greek Ombudsman, 29 (available at: [https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/greek\\_ombudsman\\_migrants\\_refugees\\_2017\\_en.pdf](https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/greek_ombudsman_migrants_refugees_2017_en.pdf), accessed on: October 06, 2017). See: The Greek Ombudsman (2017) *Return of Third-Country Nationals - Special Report 2016*. Athens: The Greek Ombudsman, available at: <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/eidikiesiespistofesallodapwn2016en.pdf>, accessed on: October 06, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> See: "16/06/2014: Report on the first year of operation of the Asylum Service", <http://asylo.gov.gr/en/?p=140>

<sup>3</sup> Managing the refugees crisis: immediate operational, budgetary and legal measures under the European Agenda on Migration: <https://goo.gl/khgBF5>, Progress report on the implementation of the hotspot approach in Greece: <https://goo.gl/4EbK5K>, Greece prepares refugee 'hotspots' amid growing EU pressure: <http://www.dw.com/en/greece-prepares-refugee-hotspots-amid-growing-eu-pressure/a-19050905>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>.

<sup>5</sup> See: Chatzopoulos, V., Fouskas, T., Pechlidi, G., DeMaio, A. and Novak, C. (2017) *European Migration Network Focused Study: The Effectiveness of Return in EU Member States: Challenges and Good Practices Linked to EU Rules and Standards*. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/Hellenic Ministry of Interior/European Commission/European Migration Network. Available at: <https://goo.gl/dNbqg4> (in English).

<sup>6</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/greece/node/1150\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/greece/node/1150_en)



- “There are two legal possibilities that could be envisaged for declaring asylum applications inadmissible, in relation to Turkey: 1) first country of asylum (Article 35 of the Asylum Procedures Directive): where the person has been already recognised as a refugee in that country or otherwise enjoys sufficient protection there; 2) safe third country (Article 38 of the Asylum Procedures Directive): where the person has not already received protection in the third country but the third country can guarantee effective access to protection to the readmitted person<sup>7</sup>”.
- “Law 4375/2016 was entered into force on April 2016, amid debate and speculation around the legal reforms needed for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement of March 18, 2016. The Law introduces a considerable number of changes to the institutional framework, the first reception procedures, the asylum procedure, the labour rights of beneficiaries of international protection, as well as the management of refugee flows in Greece. The new Asylum Law adapts the Greek legislation to the provisions of EU Directive 2013/32 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection while the asylum procedure, governed by a twofold legal framework under Presidential Decree 114/2010 for claims lodged before 7 June 2013 (“old procedure”) and Presidential Decree 113/2013 for applications filed after that date (“new procedure”), has undergone a number of significant changes<sup>8</sup>”.
- “Concerning the participation of beneficiaries of international protection in the labour market<sup>9</sup> (Articles 68-71), Law 4375/2016 establishes the automatic access to employment once applicants are provided with an asylum seeker’s card, whereas the previous legislation required a separate procedure for work permit following the granting of refugee status or an asylum seeker’s card and included conditions linked to labour market needs for specific professions<sup>10</sup>”.
- “Pursuant Law 4375/2016 (as amended with Law 4399/2016) the new Appeals Authority is established as an autonomous Service, which reports directly to the Minister for Migration Policy<sup>11</sup>”.
- “Law 4375/2016 provides for a new Directorate for Reception and a Directorate for Social Integration that both include specialised departments for the reception and integration of unaccompanied minors within the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, including the provision of a legal representative<sup>12</sup>”.
- “The provision of free legal aid has been included in Law 4375/2016 for asylum applicants at the appeal stage<sup>13</sup>. A Ministerial Decision implementing the provision for legal aid under Law 4375/2016 was adopted on 9 September 2016<sup>14</sup>. Funding for the implementation of free legal assistance has been secured through the national programme under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)<sup>15</sup>”.
- “On the 16th of June, the Hellenic Parliament approved an amendment (Law 4399/2016) to asylum law (Law 4375/2016), modifying the composition of Appeals Committees and the right of asylum seekers to be heard in appeals, against negative decisions. The Appeals Committees will now consist of two judges of the Administrative Courts, appointed by the General Commissioner of the Administrative courts, and one UNHCR representative. A representative from a list compiled by the National Commission of Human Rights may take part in the Appeals Committees if UNHCR is unable to appoint a member<sup>16</sup>. In addition, this amendment has removed Article 62(1) of Law 4375/2016, which allowed the appellant to request a personal hearing before the Appeals Committees at least two days before the appeal<sup>17</sup>”.

<sup>7</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52009PC0554>.

<sup>8</sup> Law 4375/2016 (Government Gazette A 51/03/04/2016) On the organization and operation of the Asylum Service, the Appeals Authority, the Reception and Identification Service, the establishment of the General Secretariat for Reception, the transposition into Greek legislation of the provisions of Directive 2013/32/EC “on common procedures for granting and withdrawing the status of international protection (recast) (L 180/29.6.2013), provisions on the employment of beneficiaries of international protection and other provisions (available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/GREECE\\_Law\\_4375\\_2016\\_EN\\_final.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/GREECE_Law_4375_2016_EN_final.pdf)).

<sup>9</sup> See: Grizis, V., Tsinisizelis, M., Fouskas, T., Karatrantos, A. and Mine, F. (2015) *European Migration Network Focused Study: Integration of Beneficiaries of International/Humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market: Policies and Good Practices*. EMN Focused Study 2015. Athens: Center for Security Studies/Hellenic Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction. Brussels: European Migration Network/European Commission. Available at: <https://goo.gl/5i6VA7> (in English) and <http://goo.gl/CaiuNe> (in Greek).

<sup>10</sup> Asylum Service, Answers to questions regarding the rights of international protection applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. Available at: <http://goo.gl/yZx1A>.

<sup>11</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/en/?page\\_id=52](http://asylo.gov.gr/en/?page_id=52).

<sup>12</sup> Article 31, Law 4375/2016.

<sup>13</sup> Article 44, Law 4375/2016.

<sup>14</sup> Available at: <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-allodapoi/prosphuges-politiko-asulo/upourgike-apophase-oik-12205-2016.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Commission Recommendation of 28/09/2016 addressed to the Hellenic Republic on the specific urgent measures to be taken by Greece in view of the resumption of transfers under Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013 – C (2016) 6311 final: <https://goo.gl/8RvE6b>.

<sup>16</sup> Article 86, Law 4399/2016.

<sup>17</sup> Article 86, Law 4399/2016.

- “To ensure that the Common European Asylum System applies properly, on February 10, 2016, the European Commission urged Greece to take additional measures to enable the eventual continuation of Dublin transfers, including bringing the reception conditions up to EU standards and ensuring effective access to the asylum procedures throughout Greece. This Recommendation sets out the measures that need to be taken or sustained by the Greek authorities in view of resuming Dublin transfers concerning asylum applicants who have entered Greece irregularly at external borders from March 15, 2017 onwards”.
- “Commission Recommendation of 15/06/2016 addressed to the Hellenic Republic on the specific urgent measures to be taken by Greece in view of the continuation of transfers under Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013<sup>18</sup>”.
- “There has been significant progress as regards access to education. Law 4415/2016 passed in August 2016, aims, inter alia, at securing psychosocial support and education for the children of asylum seekers, as well as the smooth integration into the Greek educational system of those who will remain in Greece, following a preparatory, transitional period<sup>19</sup>”.
- “Under the emergency relocation scheme, adopted by the Council in September 2015, and concerns the relocation from Greece and Italy to other Member States, with a view to submitting an asylum application there<sup>20</sup>. Eligibility for the relocation scheme is limited to applicants who are in clear need of international protection and are stateless residents of those countries for which the EU-wide average recognition rate is more than 75 per cent. The majority of beneficiaries were so far from Syria<sup>21</sup>”.
- “The European Council on 7 March 2016 called for an acceleration of the implementation of relocation in order to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Greece. In its conclusions of 20 and 21 October, the European Council reiterated its call for further action to accelerate the implementation of the relocation and resettlement schemes in light of the urgent need to provide support to Greece and Italy. The European Council on 15 December endorsed the Joint Action Plan on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, which included the relocation target for Greece of 3.000 monthly transfers and reiterated its call to further intensify efforts to accelerate relocation, in particular for unaccompanied minors, and existing resettlement schemes. The EU relocation scheme ended on 26 September 2017<sup>22</sup>”.
- “Due to the lack of accommodation facilities or transit facilities for minors, detention of unaccompanied minors either in detention facilities or in police stations (‘protective custody’) is imposed and takes place in unacceptable conditions<sup>23</sup>”.
- “The International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Office in Greece has signed an agreement with Greece’s Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction to implement an assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programme. Under the programme, IOM will help third country nationals to return to their country of origin, safely and in dignity. The implementation of the agreement started on June 1st and will run for three years. IOM’s AVRR programme provides for the financial and social reintegration of individuals and the cooperation between all stakeholders in origin and reception countries. The decision of returning back home is voluntary and based on the migrant’s request. A voluntary decision encompasses two elements: freedom of choice and an informed decision which requires the availability of enough accurate and objective information upon which to base the decision. IOM’s reintegration assistance is provided under the framework of the European Union (EU) and Greek government-supported programme, Implementation of Assisted Voluntary Returns. It includes AVRR<sup>24</sup> and is funded by the EU’s Asylum Migration and Integration Fund as well as the Hellenic Ministry of Interior<sup>25</sup>”.
- “On March 7, 2013, EASO and Greece signed the Operating Plan Phase II. The Plan extended EASO support to Greece up until December 2014 in various areas, e.g. training of the staff of the new services, support to the backlog committees, support for improvement of reception procedures and the management of EU funds related to asylum and reception. On 13 May 2015, EASO and Greece signed a new Support Plan which provided EASO tailor-made support to Greece until May 2016 and was subsequently amended and extended until 31st of December 2016. In addition, EASO signed the EASO Hotspot Operating Plan (HOP) to Greece on the 30th of September 2015. This Plan was amended several times, taking into account the EU-Turkey Statement, the European Agenda on Migration, including the Hotspot approach and subsequent developments, in order to reflect the operational needs both on the islands and on mainland Greece and was extended until 31st of December 2016”.

<sup>18</sup> Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160615/commission\\_recommendation\\_on\\_resuming\\_dublin\\_transfers\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160615/commission_recommendation_on_resuming_dublin_transfers_en.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Article 38, Law 4415/2016. See also: Commission Recommendation of 28/09/2016 addressed to the Hellenic Republic on the specific urgent measures to be taken by Greece in view of the resumption of transfers under Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013 – C (2016) 6311 final: <https://goo.gl/8RvE6b>

<sup>20</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2\\_eu\\_solidarity\\_a\\_refugee\\_relocation\\_system\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_eu_solidarity_a_refugee_relocation_system_en.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> [http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Relocation-procedures-up-to-14-1-2018\\_en.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Relocation-procedures-up-to-14-1-2018_en.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://greece.iom.int/en/news/successful-conclusion-eu-relocation-scheme>

<sup>23</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/61484>, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2017/9/59b24a377/unhcr-urges-action-ease-conditions-greek-islands.html>

<sup>24</sup> See also: Grizis, V., Tsinisizelis, M., Fouskas, T., Karatrantos, A. and Mine F. (2015) *European Migration Network Focused Study: Dissemination of Information on Voluntary Return: How to Reach Irregular Migrants not in Contact with the Authorities*. EMN Focused Study 2015. Athens: Center for Security Studies/Hellenic Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction. Brussels: European Migration Network/European Commission. Available at: <http://goo.gl/b3KI7L> (in English) and <http://goo.gl/WazULW> (in Greek).

<sup>25</sup> Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programmes (AVRR): <https://goo.gl/YThgJA>

- "Another important component in the Greek migration context has been the deployment of NATO vessels to assist in patrolling Aegean waters. In February 2016, NATO responded to a request from Germany, Greece, and Turkey to assist in efforts to address the situation in the Aegean Sea. The alliance, in coordination with Frontex, began to conduct 'reconnaissance, monitoring, and surveillance of illegal crossings', between Turkey and Greece".

In the years 2014-2016, as part of the management of asylum applications from third country nationals and efforts to control migration flows, many legislative developments, major initiatives, and measures have been taken by the State, with the valuable contribution of International Organizations and Citizens' Organizations.

Regarding the legislative framework, the following were adopted:

**Laws:**

Law 4251/2014, "Immigration and Social Integration Code and other provisions"<sup>26</sup>.

Law 4332/2015<sup>27</sup>, Amendment of the provisions of the Greek Nationality Code – Amendment of Law 4521/2014 to transpose to Greek law Directive 2011/98/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council "on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside<sup>28</sup> and work<sup>29</sup>, in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third country workers legally residing in a Member State" and Directive 2014/36/EU "on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers" and other provisions.

Law 4375/2016, On the organization and operation of the Asylum Service, the Appeals Authority, the Reception and Identification Service, the establishment of the General Secretariat for Reception, the transposition into Greek legislation of the provisions of Directive 2013/32/EC "on common procedures for granting and withdrawing the status of international protection (recast) (L 180/29.6.2013), provisions on the employment of beneficiaries of international protection<sup>30</sup> and other provisions<sup>31</sup>. "In addition to the organization and operation of these services, other regulations are also included. Among these are Article 22, which provides for the grant of a residence permit for humanitarian purposes to applicants for international protection, subject to specific conditions and Articles 68 to 71, providing for the conditions for access to employment of recognized beneficiaries of international protection, applicants for international protection and of persons who have been granted a residence permit for humanitarian purposes in Greece"<sup>32</sup>.

Law 4399/2016, "Amendment of Law 4375/2016 (Article 86)"<sup>33</sup>

Law 4485/2017, "Amendment of Law 4375/2016 (A 51)"<sup>34</sup>

**The following Presidential Decrees:**

Presidential Decree 123/2016 (Government Gazette A -208-04/11/2016)

"Reconstruction and renaming of the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Government, restoration of the Ministry of Tourism, establishment of the Ministry for Migration Policy and Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Information, renaming of Ministries of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, Economy, Development and Tourism and Infrastructure, Transport and Networks"<sup>35</sup>.

Presidential Decree 24/2015 (Government Gazette A-20-27/01/2015)

<sup>26</sup> Available at: <http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/24e0c302-6021-4a6b-b7e4-8259e281e5f3/metanast-N4251-2014.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Available at: <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/4332.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Available at: <http://www.eliamap.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Pdfgr.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> See Marouda, M.-D., Rossidi, M., Koutsouraki, E. and Saranti, V. (2015) *Changes in Immigration Status and Purpose of Stay: An Overview of EU Member States Approaches. EMN Focused Study 2015*. Athens: Institute of International Relations (IIR)/Hellenic Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction and Brussels: European Migration Network (EMN)/European Commission. Available at: <http://goo.gl/7ib7Wl> (in English) and <http://goo.gl/pmuU5Y> (in Greek).

<sup>30</sup> Available at: <http://www.eliamap.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Pdfgr.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Available at: <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/n-4375-2016.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Available at: <https://www.synigoros.gr/?i=foreigner.el.politikoi-nomoi.359552>

<sup>33</sup> Available at: <https://www.taxheaven.gr/laws/law/index/law/757>

<sup>34</sup> Available at: <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-ekpaideuse/tritobathmia-ekpaideuse/nomos-4485-2017-fek-114a-4-8-2017.html>

<sup>35</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/%CE%A0%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B5%CE%B4%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C-%CE%94%CE%B9%CE%AC%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CF%83%CF%8D%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%A5%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B3%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%9C%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82.pdf>

“Establishment and renaming of Ministries, transfer of the General Secretariat for Social Insurance”<sup>36</sup>.

**The following Decisions:**

Decision No. 11294 (Government Gazette B - 2225 – 15/10/2015)

“Establishment of an Independent Asylum Unit for the Relocation of Applicants for International Protection”<sup>37</sup>.

Decision No. 6794 (Government Gazette B-1411-08/07/2015)

“Launching of the Asylum Regional Office of Thessaloniki and determining the local competence of the Regional Offices of Asylum of Attica, Thessaloniki, Rhodes, Lesbos, S. Evros and N. Evros, as well as the Independent Asylum Units of Amygdaleza and Patras”<sup>38</sup>.

Decision No. 3931 (Government Gazette B -878-19/05/2015)

“Enlargement of the Autonomous Asylum of Thessaloniki”<sup>39</sup>.

Decision 328/2015 (Government Gazette B-105-20/01/2015)

“Competences of Asylum Separate Service Units”<sup>40</sup>.

Joint Ministerial Decision 10566/2014 (Government Gazette B-3223-02/2/2014)

“Procedure for the granting of travel documents to beneficiaries of international protection and to applicants for international protection”<sup>41</sup>.

Decision c. 9839/2014 (Government Gazette B-3125-20/11/2014)

“Abolition of the Independent Asylum of Iasmos Komotini - Establishment of an Independent Asylum Unit in Xanthi”<sup>42</sup>.

Decision 8248/2014 (Government Gazette B-2635-03/10/2014)

Term of validity of applicants for international protection: “The lists of applicants for international protection shall be valid for four (4) months, with the exception of those of applicants for international protection whose countries of origin are Egypt, Albania, Georgia, Bangladesh and Pakistan, which will be valid for three (3) months, based on the expected duration of decisions on applications for international protection”<sup>43</sup>.

Joint Ministerial Decision 7315/2014 (Government Gazette B-2461-16/09/2014)

“Procedure for the granting of uniform residence permit (ADET) to beneficiaries of international protection”<sup>44</sup>.

Ministerial Decision 6416/2014 (Government Gazette B-2034-25/07/2014)

“Asylum Service Operation Regulation”<sup>45</sup>.

With regard to policies and actions implemented in 2014-2016, on the part of the State:

Within the framework of the operation of state-owned first-line operators in the management/reception/identification of incoming migratory flows (Reception and Identification Service of the Ministry for Migration Policy - General Secretariat for Reception<sup>46</sup>) and the granting of a legal status - asylum or international protection (Asylum Service of the Ministry for Migration Policy<sup>47</sup>), major developments have been recorded in terms of strengthening their operation and work.

<sup>36</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%85%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B3%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%89%CE%BD.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/apofasi-11294-15.10.15-FEK-2225.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/%CE%A0%CE%93%CE%91-%CE%98%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%A3%CE%91%CE%9B%CE%9F%CE%9D%CE%99%CE%9A%CE%97%CE%A3.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AKA\\_THESSALONIKIS.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AKA_THESSALONIKIS.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/%CE%91%CE%A1%CE%9C%CE%9F%CE%94%CE%99%CE%9F%CE%A4%CE%97%CE%A4%CE%95%CE%A3-%CE%91%CE%9A%CE%91.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TDV.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/AKA-%CE%9E%CE%91%CE%9D%CE%98%CE%97%CE%A3.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/apofasi\\_8248\\_15.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/apofasi_8248_15.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/KYA-ADET1.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/kanonismos-vphresias-asyloy.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> Available at: <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/>

<sup>47</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/>

#### Asylum Service:

The progress of the operation and the work of the Asylum Service to ensure a fair and efficient asylum procedure in EU standards is reflected in the quality of the procedures for examining applications for international protection at first instance, in the quality of international protection award decisions with sufficient reason at the time of the examination of the requests<sup>48</sup>, and in all the means used by the Office to facilitate procedures such as providing interpretation and interviewing via skype. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the period from 07/06/2013 until 31/05/2014 (one year in service), the recognition rates for the first grade were 14% refugee status and 6,1% subsidiary protection, while for the second degree 9,8% refugee status and 4,1% subsidiary protection. UNHCR considers the successful transition from the old, extremely problematic asylum system of 2013 to the new system of 2014 as a positive development of major importance<sup>49</sup>. The progress in the operation of the Asylum Service is also reflected in the staff: At the end of 2014, the Asylum Service had 218 staff, which grew to 290 by the end of 2015 and has nearly doubled since, with 650 people as of January 1 of this year. As is also stated in the press release for the work of the Asylum Service for the year 2016, its resources in the course of these years tripled, thanks to the rapid absorption of European funds and the assistance of Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP in Greek)<sup>50</sup>. In December 2016, 7 Asylum Regional Offices and 11 Autonomous Asylum Units were functioning at the mainland and at five islands hosting a hotspot. Particularly important in strengthening the work of A.S. is the contribution of Hellenic Police (with 25 police officers carrying out administrative and security checks for applicants) as well as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), through the provision of experts to assist the work of the Asylum Service in the relocation process, the Dublin process<sup>51</sup>, and other issues<sup>52</sup> on the Greek islands. More specifically, EASO provided specific support to Greece from April 2011 (Operational Plan Phase I) and March 2013 (Phase II Operational Plan), at the request of the country, due to the severe pressures that the Greek asylum system experienced because of the significant increase in the flow of third-country nationals at the external borders of Europe. This support continued in 2015 with a new support scheme (Special Support Plan) until May 2016. The plan included support for a number of priority areas, "The absorption of EU funds and other financial resources, the design and implementation of projects, the training of staff of relevant Greek services under the EASO training programme, the Dublin III procedures, the country of origin information), the creation of an effective guardianship system and the linguistic transcription of interviews"<sup>53</sup>. Following the closure of the Northern Borders and for the serving of thousands of asylum seekers who were entrapped in the country in February 2016, the Asylum Service began the process of massive – rapid pre-registration of requests for the mapping and managing of people (granting of asylum, relocation process, family reunification, etc.)<sup>54</sup>. An important achievement in Greece regarding the management of the incoming third country nationals is also the programme of relocation for people who do not wish to stay in the country. Asylum Service had registered 21.431 applications of third-country nationals for inclusion in this programme, until 27 December 2016, when the reception places received from another Member State reached 13.634. Cooperation between Member States is described in two (2) European Council Decisions introducing interim measures in the field of international protection for Italy and Greece<sup>55</sup>: Decision No 1523/2015 and Decision No 1601/2015<sup>56</sup>. According to Asylum Service statistics, the total number of relocation requests, until November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, amounted to 24.904 and 22.812 were accepted<sup>57</sup>. In May 2015, the first year of implementation of the Action "Assistance to the Asylum Service" was completed<sup>58</sup>, including an action to support asylum procedures. It had a total budget of EUR 3.996.264,32, which was funded 85% from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, via the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA) (i.e. the EEA Grants during the years 2009-2014), and by 15% from funds of the National Programme of Public Investments of the Hellenic Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection<sup>59</sup>. Regarding the procedures for age verification of asylum seekers, a Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) No 1982/15 February 2016 for the minority assessment through psychological examination and health examinations was published and instructions were developed for the staff of the Asylum Service to implement the Joint Ministerial Decision (JMC)<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> Available at: [https://www.unhcr.gr/fileadmin/Greece/Extras/WRD\\_2014/2014\\_PROTECTION\\_POSITIONS\\_GR.pdf](https://www.unhcr.gr/fileadmin/Greece/Extras/WRD_2014/2014_PROTECTION_POSITIONS_GR.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> Available at: [https://www.unhcr.gr/fileadmin/Greece/Extras/WRD\\_2014/2014\\_PROTECTION\\_POSITIONS\\_GR.pdf](https://www.unhcr.gr/fileadmin/Greece/Extras/WRD_2014/2014_PROTECTION_POSITIONS_GR.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/%CE%94%CE%A4-%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%80%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BC%CE%B5%CC%81%CE%BD%CE%B1-2016-17.1.2016.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>52</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/%CE%94%CE%A4-%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%80%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BC%CE%B5%CC%81%CE%BD%CE%B1-2016-17.1.2016.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EASO\\_press-release-SPP-EL.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EASO_press-release-SPP-EL.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/%CE%94%CE%A4-%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%80%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BC%CE%B5%CC%81%CE%BD%CE%B1-2016-17.1.2016.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Available at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6324\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6324_en.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Relocation-procedures-up-to-26-11-17\\_gr.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Relocation-procedures-up-to-26-11-17_gr.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Press\\_May\\_2015-1.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Press_May_2015-1.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)



### Reception and Identification Service

The First Reception Service was put into operation at Directorate level by the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection and later by the Ministry of Interior. It was admitted to the General Secretariat of Reception by Law 4375/2016 as the Reception and Identification Service (initially at the Ministry of Interior and now at the Ministry for Migration Policy). The Reception and Identification Service's task is to effectively carry out the procedures for identification and temporary stay of third-country nationals or stateless persons entering the country without the legal formalities, in accordance with Article 25 of the Presidential Decree (P.D.) 122/2017 "Organization of the Ministry for Migration Policy"<sup>61</sup>. In particular, the reception and identification procedures shall include: (a) the recording of the personal data of the third country nationals and the receipt and registration of the fingerprints of those who have reached the age of 14; (b) their identity and nationality; (c) medical care and the provision of any necessary care and psychosocial support; (d) information on their rights and obligations, in particular on the procedure for affiliation to international protection status and on procedures; (e) provision of services for persons belonging to vulnerable groups; (f) referral to start the process of international protection for those who wish it; (g) referral to the competent services for the purposes of readmission, return, or expulsion<sup>62</sup>.

The Reception and Identification Service comprises the Central Service and the Regional Reception and Identification Services. In 2013, the primary First Reception Center (as it was then called) began its operation in Filakio, Evros, at the Greek-Turkish border area (Government Gazette 3543/B/31/12/2012)<sup>63</sup>.

The First Reception Center of Lesbos (F.R.C.) was established by Government Gazette 1373/B'/29/05/2014. The First Reception Centers of Kos and of Leros were established by Government Gazette 2602/B' 02.12.2015 and the First Reception Centers of Chios and Samos were established by Government Gazette 10/B'/08/01.2016. It is noteworthy that in 2014, Samos and Lesbos were operating the Mobile Units A<sup>64</sup> and B respectively, corresponding to the Government Gazette 1066/B'/29/04/2013<sup>65</sup>, providing first reception of all the third-country nationals who were arrested because they entered the country without the legal formalities. The First Reception Centers were renamed "Host and Identification Centers" with Law 4375/2016 (Government Gazette 51/A'/03/04/2016). In addition, the Open Center for Migrants Registered for Voluntary Return and Reintegration (OCAVRR) in Attica park in the Municipality of Athens, was established by Government Gazette 1990/B'/15/09/2015. The Open Center for Temporary Reception of Applicants for International Protection in Leros was established by Government Gazette 2177/B'/13/07/2016<sup>66</sup> and the Open Temporary Reception Structures of third-country nationals or stateless persons who have applied for international protection in Attica and Diavata Thessaloniki<sup>67</sup> were constituted by Government Gazette 3720/B'/16/11/2016<sup>68</sup>.

The Reception and Identification Service has collaborated with European Institutions and International Organizations, such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), UNHCR, FRA, NORCAP, and International Organization for Migration (IOM) for the organization of seminars, training seminars and thematic educational workshops for the training of its staff<sup>69</sup>.

On 24/06/15, the training of staff of the Service entitled: "Training in Detecting and Managing Cases of Child Trafficking and Protection of Unaccompanied Minors" was completed in the premises of the First Reception Service. The training cycle was organized by the Southeast Protection Net (prevention of child trafficking and protection of unaccompanied minors at the Greek-Turkish border-SESNet)<sup>70</sup>. In the context of the analysis of the thematic section mentioned, the rapporteurs placed particular emphasis on the following issues:

<sup>61</sup> Available at: <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/20171016-organismos-yp-met-pol.pdf> see also <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/content.php?id=4>

<sup>62</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>64</sup> Available at: <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/content.php?lang=en&id=16&pid=10>

<sup>65</sup> Available at: <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/content.php?lang=en&id=17&pid=10>

<sup>66</sup> Available at: [http://www.et.gr/idoes-nph/search/pdfViewerForm.html?args=5C7QrtC22wFHp\\_31M9ESQXdtvSoCrlL8EgH9xtRd-T3U4LPcASlceJlnJ48\\_97uHrMts-zFzeyCiBSQOpYnTy36MacmUFCx2ppFvBej56Mmc8Qdb8ZfRjQZnsIAdk8Lv\\_e6czmhEembNmZCMxLMtYaoXTZnR60H-Ji-d-wkPEevB6B6SathgvvZcKD65IDU](http://www.et.gr/idoes-nph/search/pdfViewerForm.html?args=5C7QrtC22wFHp_31M9ESQXdtvSoCrlL8EgH9xtRd-T3U4LPcASlceJlnJ48_97uHrMts-zFzeyCiBSQOpYnTy36MacmUFCx2ppFvBej56Mmc8Qdb8ZfRjQZnsIAdk8Lv_e6czmhEembNmZCMxLMtYaoXTZnR60H-Ji-d-wkPEevB6B6SathgvvZcKD65IDU)

<sup>67</sup> Available at: [http://www.et.gr/idoes-nph/search/pdfViewerForm.html?args=5C7QrtC22wFHp\\_31M9ESQXdtvSoCrlL8ZtcSd51v8zNZ8op6Z\\_wSuJlnJ48\\_97uHrMts-zFzeyCiBSQOpYnTy36MacmUFCx2ppFvBej56Mmc8Qdb8ZfRjQZnsIAdk8Lv\\_e6czmhEembNmZCMxLMtUGagGP1OYPFFftDQVB28w4OOVBGEdyS324EAmvZvDw](http://www.et.gr/idoes-nph/search/pdfViewerForm.html?args=5C7QrtC22wFHp_31M9ESQXdtvSoCrlL8ZtcSd51v8zNZ8op6Z_wSuJlnJ48_97uHrMts-zFzeyCiBSQOpYnTy36MacmUFCx2ppFvBej56Mmc8Qdb8ZfRjQZnsIAdk8Lv_e6czmhEembNmZCMxLMtUGagGP1OYPFFftDQVB28w4OOVBGEdyS324EAmvZvDw)

<sup>68</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>70</sup> Available at: <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/news-detail.php?type=press&id=35>



- Legal Framework and Unaccompanied Minors
- Children's rights
- Trafficking of human beings
- Trafficking of Minors
- Health problems for victims of trafficking
- Minority Assessment
- A procedure for detecting minor trafficking victims
- Interview with minors

The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the European Union (Frontex)<sup>71</sup>, for its part, helps Greece to register migrants at the northern border with additional border guards and has deployed Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT) in the Aegean Sea and the Aegean Islands, at the request of Greece<sup>72</sup>.

To sum up, for the year 2015, the developments in the field of refugee management<sup>73</sup>, including the activation of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism<sup>74</sup>, the strengthening of the reception and identification and asylum services, the increased presence of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex)<sup>75</sup> at the Greek borders, the operation of hotspots<sup>76</sup> on rapid identification of the data of the incoming population process<sup>77</sup> and its separation into beneficiaries of international protection and migrants<sup>78</sup>, and the return procedures for persons who are not legally recognized, were of great importance<sup>79</sup>.

**Q2. To what extent is the concept of a change in asylum applications (either a significant increase or decrease) defined in your (Member) State (e.g. in legislation, policies and/or plans)? How is it determined what a significant influx is?**

*Please also mention the responsible authority.*

- Legislation
- Policies
- Practices
- Joint Action Plan for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement: In order to ensure effective implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement on relieving the pressure on the Greek islands, an action plan was drafted by the EU along with the Hellenic authorities<sup>80</sup>.
- The main competent authorities are the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Migration Policy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Labor, the National Center for Social Solidarity (NCSS), the Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Hellenic Police, the Hellenic Coast Guard, and the Hellenic Army.

<sup>71</sup> Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/>

<sup>72</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> European Commission (2015) *Final Report from The Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Follow-Up to the Leaders' Meeting On Refugee Flows along the Western Balkans Route – 15.12.2015 Com(2015) 676*. Strasbourg: European Commission. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/securing-eu-borders/legal-documents/docs/report\\_western\\_balkans\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/securing-eu-borders/legal-documents/docs/report_western_balkans_en.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/Refugee\\_Crisis/EUCPM\\_Support\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/Refugee_Crisis/EUCPM_Support_en.pdf)

<sup>75</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> European Commission (2015) *Final Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council Managing the Refugee Crisis: State of Play of the Implementation of the Priority Actions Under the European Agenda on Migration – 14.10.2015 Com(2015) 510*. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/communication\\_on\\_eam\\_state\\_of\\_play\\_20151014\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/communication_on_eam_state_of_play_20151014_en.pdf)

<sup>77</sup> See also: Chatzopoulos, V., Fouskas, T. Mine, F.-M., DeMaio, A. and Novak, C. (2017) *European Migration Network Focused Study: Challenges and practices for establishing applicants' identity in the migration process*. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/ Hellenic Ministry for Migration Policy/European Commission/European Migration Network.

<sup>78</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>79</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/december2016-action-plan-migration-crisis-management\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/december2016-action-plan-migration-crisis-management_en.pdf)

**Q3. Did your (Member) State experience significant changes in the influx of asylum applicants before 2014 (2000 onwards e.g. the increased influx related to the war in former Yugoslavia)? If so, what measures were introduced to enhance the preparedness of your Member State as a response to these changes in the influx of asylum applicants?**

*Please consider previous experiences of influx when defining the fluctuations over 2014-2016 and substantiate your answer below, giving also an overview of the baseline of your Member State in reference to migration flows and the definition of preparedness used in your Member State.*

No increase in asylum applicants' influx has been registered in that period <sup>81</sup> .
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**Q4. Did your Member State experience a significant fluctuation in number of asylum applications (both increase and decrease) in the years 2014, 2015 and/or 2016? Could you please specify and explain the period(s) in which there was such a fluctuation, and the nature of the fluctuation (increase/decrease)?**

**Please make a distinction between a fluctuation in the sense of an increase and a decrease of asylum seeker numbers.**

**Please indicate: Yes/No**

If **yes**, please fill out the field below and continue with question 6. If **no**, please go to question 5.

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<sup>81</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

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Statistical Data of the Greek Asylum Service (from 07/06/2013 to 31/12/2017)

**Table 1: Asylum applications**

Asylum Applications										
	2013	Difference % (2013-2014)	2014	Difference % (2014-2015)	2015	Difference % (2015-2016)	2016	Difference % (2016-2017)	2017	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>4814</b>		<b>9431</b>		<b>13188</b>		<b>51061</b>		<b>58661</b>	<b>137155</b>
<b>Monthly average</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>14.3% ↑</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>39.8% ↑</b>	<b>1099</b>	<b>287.2% ↑</b>	<b>4255</b>	<b>14.9% ↑</b>	<b>4888</b>	<b>2494</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 2: Asylum applications – Gender and Age range**

Asylum Applications - Gender and Age range																					
	2013			2014			2015			2016			December 2017			2017			Total		
Age ranges	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
<b>0-13</b>	255	182	437	388	306	694	919	792	1711	7684	7105	14789	511	390	901	7620	6726	14346	16866	15111	31977
<b>14-17</b>	272	37	309	569	84	653	608	168	776	3535	1389	4924	349	65	414	4350	1094	5444	9334	2772	12106
<b>18-34</b>	2370	600	2970	5171	921	6092	6198	1466	7664	15282	6593	21875	1465	521	1986	21477	7165	28642	50498	16745	67243
<b>35-64</b>	748	338	1086	1510	460	1970	2098	856	2954	5356	3796	9152	435	215	650	6572	3420	9992	16284	8870	25154
<b>65 and over</b>	7	5	12	7	15	22	35	48	83	144	177	321	10	10	20	107	130	237	300	375	675
<b>Total</b>	<b>3652</b>	<b>1162</b>	<b>4814</b>	<b>7645</b>	<b>1786</b>	<b>9431</b>	<b>9858</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>13188</b>	<b>32001</b>	<b>19060</b>	<b>51061</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>1201</b>	<b>3971</b>	<b>40126</b>	<b>18535</b>	<b>58661</b>	<b>93282</b>	<b>43873</b>	<b>137155</b>
<b>Unaccompanied Minors (included in the above total)</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>1663</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2147</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>2275</b>	<b>4704</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>5244</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

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**Table 3: Asylum applications – Region of registration**

Asylum Applications - Region of registration							
	2013	2014	2015	2016	December 2017	2017	Total
ATTICA	4398	6357	7830	14141	572	8839	41565
THESSALONIKI	0	412	1191	11411	388	7626	20640
LESVOS	30	209	692	5093	1196	11952	17976
CHIOS	0	0	0	3395	328	6513	9908
THRACE	166	900	829	4459	88	2040	8394
SAMOS	0	0	0	2433	475	5116	7549
PIRAEUS	0	0	0	2473	66	3977	6450
ALIMOS	0	0	0	3141	107	3258	6399
AMYGDALAZA	98	606	588	451	136	1543	3286
RHODES	0	454	803	931	43	699	2887
KOS	0	0	0	686	142	1698	2384
FYLAKIO	122	399	412	448	101	955	2336
LEROS	0	0	0	871	53	1389	2260
PATRA	0	54	265	414	54	987	1720
XANTHI	0	40	578	386	53	689	1693
KORINTHOS	0	0	0	324	131	1065	1389
HERAKLION	0	0	0	4	38	315	319
Total	4814	9431	13188	51061	3971	58661	137155

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 4: Asylum applications – Countries of Origin**

Asylum Applications - Countries of Origin								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	December 2017	2017	Total	%
SYRIA	252	773	3490	26673	979	16396	47584	34.7%
PAKISTAN	610	1618	1822	4693	659	8923	17666	12.9%
AFGHANISTAN	803	1709	1720	4366	541	7567	16165	11.8%
IRAQ	107	174	661	4811	625	7924	13677	10.0%
ALBANIA	419	569	1003	1420	205	2450	5861	4.3%
BANGLADESH	230	633	738	1215	81	1383	4199	3.1%
IRAN	131	361	241	1096	75	1316	3145	2.3%
GEORGIA	342	350	386	687	90	1107	2872	2.1%
PALESTINE	17	74	60	852	52	1311	2314	1.7%
EGYPT	255	280	342	334	31	970	2181	1.6%
OTHER COUNTRIES	1648	2890	2725	4914	633	9314	21491	15.7%
Total	4814	9431	13188	51061	3971	58661	137155	100.0%

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

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**The changing influx of asylum seekers in 2014-2016: Member State responses**

**Table 5: 1st Instance Procedures**

1st Instance Procedures							
	2013	2014	2015	2016	December 2017	2017	Total
Refugee Status	229	1223	3647	2452	969	9323	16874
Subsidiary Protection	93	487	347	249	143	1041	2217
Negative in substance	1754	4254	4434	6589	998	12149	29180
Inadmissible decisions	261	1453	2019	15241	404	22497	41471
a) due to the application of the safe third country principle (Border Procedures)				1312	39	919	
b) due to acceptance by another Member State (Dublin Regulation procedures)				2070	313	8330	
c) due to acceptance by another Member State (Relocation procedures)				11000	2	12323	
d) on subsequent (repeated) applications				775	50	915	
e) due to administrative reasons				84		10	
Implicit & Explicit withdrawals <sup>1</sup>	243	1078	2375	2387	644	6989	13072
<b>Total</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>8495</b>	<b>12822</b>	<b>26918</b>	<b>3158</b>	<b>51999</b>	<b>102814</b>
Monthly average	369	708	1069	3513		6772	2603
Recognition Rate (%) <sup>2</sup>	15.5%	28.7%	47.4%	29.1%	52.7%	46.0%	39.6%

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 6: 1st Instance Procedures – Unaccompanied Minors**

1st Instance Procedures - Unaccompanied Minors																					
	2013			2014			2015			2016			December 2017			2017			Total		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Refugee Status	7	1	8	45	6	51	54	19	73	52	13	65	23	2	25	131	29	160	289	68	357
Subsidiary Protection	4		4	24		24	22		22	17		17	4		4	27		27	94	0	94
Negative in substance	53	2	55	147	6	153	92	6	98	216	6	222	36	1	37	485	8	493	993	28	1021
Inadmissible decisions <sup>3</sup>	12	3	15	56	21	77	68	10	78	310	117	427	27	2	29	572	168	740	1018	319	1337
Implicit & Explicit withdrawals <sup>1</sup>	14		14	85		85	106	10	116	55	9	64	19		19	241	29	270	501	48	549
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>1456</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>1690</b>	<b>2895</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>3358</b>

(1): This category includes withdrawals that have not been revoked

(2): Calculation based only on decisions in substance (Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection, Negative in substance)

(3): This category includes decisions: (a) due to the application of the safe third country principle (Border Procedures), (b) due to acceptance by another Member State (Relocation procedures), (c) due to acceptance by another Member State (Dublin Regulation procedures), (d) on subsequent (repeated) applications, (e) due to administrative reasons

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

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**Table 7: 1st Instance Procedures – Decisions in Substance per Gender and Age range**

1st Instance Procedures - Decisions in Substance per Gender and Age range																						
Type of Decision in Substance	Age range	2013			2014			2015			2016			December 2017			2017			Total		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Refugee Status	0-13	7	12	19	62	58	120	382	339	721	328	328	656	172	145	317	1656	1507	3163	2435	2244	4679
	14-17	14	3	17	60	16	76	133	62	195	119	57	176	70	29	99	488	213	701	814	351	1165
	18-34	112	35	147	631	166	797	1304	516	1820	665	396	1061	224	145	369	2482	1465	3947	5194	2578	7772
	35-64	32	14	46	186	43	229	594	282	876	325	215	540	102	76	178	873	595	1468	2010	1149	3159
	65 and over					1	1	9	26	35	10	9	19	2	4	6	17	27	44	36	63	99
	<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>1223</b>	<b>2422</b>	<b>1225</b>	<b>3647</b>	<b>1447</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>2452</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>5516</b>	<b>3807</b>	<b>9323</b>	<b>10489</b>	<b>6385</b>	<b>16874</b>
Subsidiary Protection	0-13	9	7	16	16	12	28	13	8	21	12	11	23	26	18	44	167	132	299	217	170	387
	14-17	6		6	39	3	42	31	2	33	32	2	34	10	3	13	72	15	87	180	22	202
	18-34	39	13	52	313	31	344	203	21	224	116	23	139	43	17	60	349	122	471	1020	210	1230
	35-64	10	8	18	65	8	73	46	20	66	30	21	51	13	12	25	119	62	181	270	119	389
	65 and over		1	1					3	3		2	2	1		1	1	2	3	1	8	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>1041</b>	<b>1688</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>2217</b>
Negative in substance	0-13	86	70	156	92	68	160	98	84	182	148	126	274	41	43	84	373	355	728	797	703	1500
	14-17	90	14	104	202	25	227	159	22	181	390	30	420	65	11	76	869	57	926	1710	148	1858
	18-34	858	236	1094	2446	464	2910	2602	533	3135	4113	488	4601	573	66	639	7555	805	8360	17574	2526	20100
	35-64	229	169	398	674	277	951	659	268	927	944	337	1281	156	43	199	1662	448	2110	4168	1499	5667
	65 and over	1	1	2	4	2	6	3	6	9	4	9	13				11	14	25	23	32	55
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>1754</b>	<b>3418</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>4254</b>	<b>3521</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>4434</b>	<b>5599</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>6589</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>10470</b>	<b>1679</b>	<b>12149</b>	<b>24272</b>	<b>4908</b>	<b>29180</b>
Decisions in Substance in total	0-13	102	89	191	170	138	308	493	431	924	488	465	953	239	206	445	2196	1994	4190	3449	3117	6566
	14-17	110	17	127	301	44	345	323	86	409	541	89	630	145	43	188	1429	285	1714	2704	521	3225
	18-34	1009	284	1293	3390	661	4051	4109	1070	5179	4894	907	5801	840	228	1068	10386	2392	12778	23788	5314	29102
	35-64	271	191	462	925	328	1253	1299	570	1869	1299	573	1872	271	131	402	2654	1105	3759	6448	2767	9215
	65 and over	1	2	3	4	3	7	12	35	47	14	20	34	3	4	7	29	43	72	60	103	163
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1493</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>2076</b>	<b>4790</b>	<b>1174</b>	<b>5964</b>	<b>6236</b>	<b>2192</b>	<b>8428</b>	<b>7236</b>	<b>2054</b>	<b>9290</b>	<b>1498</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>2110</b>	<b>16694</b>	<b>5819</b>	<b>22513</b>	<b>36449</b>	<b>11822</b>	<b>48271</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 8: 1st Instance Procedures – Inadmissible Decisions per Gender and Age range**

1st Instance Procedures - Inadmissible Decisions <sup>3</sup> per Gender and Age range																						
	Age range	2013			2014			2015			2016			December 2017			2017			Total		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Inadmissible Decisions in total	0-13	39	26	65	161	103	264	187	169	356	2758	2633	5391	76	63	139	4726	4351	9077	7871	7282	15153
	14-17	15	5	20	101	24	125	123	41	164	683	435	1118	47	21	68	1448	845	2293	2370	1350	3720
	18-34	93	24	117	597	87	684	795	128	923	3704	2221	5925	83	48	131	4206	2862	7068	9395	5322	14717
	35-64	41	15	56	305	69	374	446	111	557	1540	1191	2731	35	29	64	1992	1910	3902	4324	3296	7620
	65 and over	2	1	3	2	4	6	10	9	19	33	43	76	1	1	2	72	85	157	119	142	261
	<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>1561</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>8718</b>	<b>6523</b>	<b>15241</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>12444</b>	<b>10053</b>	<b>22497</b>	<b>24079</b>	<b>17392</b>	<b>41471</b>



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Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 9: 1st Instance Procedures – Implicit & Explicit withdrawals per Gender and Age range**

1st Instance Procedures - Implicit & Explicit withdrawals <sup>1</sup> per Gender and Age range																						
	Age range	2013			2014			2015			2016			December 2017			2017			Total		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Implicit & Explicit withdrawals in total	0-13	13	10	23	40	23	63	106	91	197	208	196	404	44	35	79	696	549	1245	1063	869	1932
	14-17	22	1	23	103	4	107	190	28	218	118	50	168	44	6	50	484	144	628	917	227	1144
	18-34	107	44	151	570	141	711	1324	239	1563	1079	281	1360	293	100	393	2811	1020	3831	5891	1725	7616
	35-64	32	14	46	149	46	195	278	101	379	294	145	439	79	38	117	823	416	1239	1576	722	2298
	65 and over				1	1	2	10	8	18	6	10	16	1	4	5	21	25	46	38	44	82
	Total	174	69	243	863	215	1078	1908	467	2375	1705	682	2387	461	183	644	4835	2154	6989	9485	3587	13072

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 10: 1st Instance Procedures – Recognition Rates (%) (Countries with more than 200 Decisions in substance)**

1st Instance Procedures - Recognition Rates (%) <sup>2</sup> (Countries with more than 200 Decisions in substance)			
10 Countries of Origin with the highest recognition rates		10 Countries of Origin with the lowest recognition rates	
SYRIA	99.6%	GEORGIA	0.0%
PALESTINE	95.0%	ALBANIA	0.2%
STATELESS	87.7%	PAKISTAN	2.4%
ERITREA	85.7%	ALGERIA	2.5%
SOMALIA	78.0%	INDIA	2.9%
IRAQ	74.0%	BANGLADESH	3.6%
AFGHANISTAN	67.5%	EGYPT	6.6%
SUDAN	59.1%	CHINA	8.6%
ETHIOPIA	58.3%	MOROCCO	11.0%
IRAN	56.0%	NIGERIA	11.9%

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

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**Table 11: 1st Instance Procedures – Appeals – Countries of Origin**

1st Instance Procedures - Appeals - Countries of Origin							
	2013	2014	2015	2016	December 2017	2017	Total
PAKISTAN	187	977	1044	1872	459	4850	8930
ALBANIA	189	618	381	842	227	1516	3546
BANGLADESH	98	338	491	526	77	860	2313
SYRIA	3	10	4	1172	37	965	2154
GEORGIA	119	327	195	365	35	520	1526
EGYPT	52	308	136	328	28	359	1183
AFGHANISTAN	28	290	180	210	78	448	1156
NIGERIA	36	242	250	242	6	151	921
ALGERIA	9	88	61	357	14	286	801
IRAQ	23	41	35	46	26	353	498
OTHER COUNTRIES	308	1008	935	1288	106	1394	4933
<b>Total</b>	<b>1052</b>	<b>4247</b>	<b>3712</b>	<b>7248</b>	<b>1093</b>	<b>11702</b>	<b>27961</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

**Table 12: 1st Instance Procedures – Pending Applications – Countries of Origin**

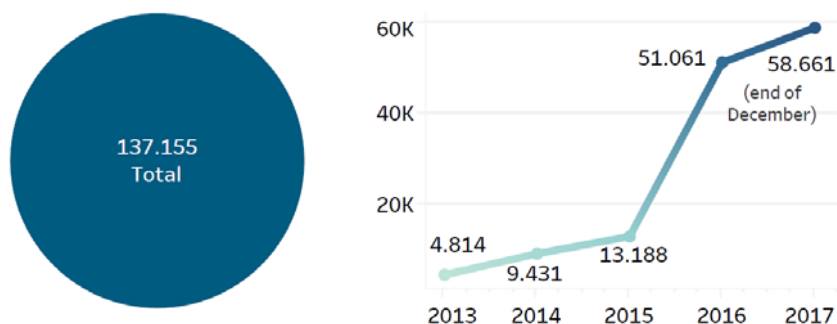
1st Instance Procedures - Pending Applications - Countries of Origin	
SYRIA	9105
AFGHANISTAN	6549
IRAQ	5146
PAKISTAN	4749
OTHER COUNTRIES	10791
<b>Total</b>	<b>36340</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/g4V1NR>).

Asylum Procedures from 07/06/2013-31/12/2017

Figure 1: Applications by year

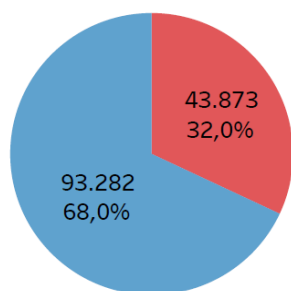
Applications by year



Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 2: Applications by gender

Applications by gender



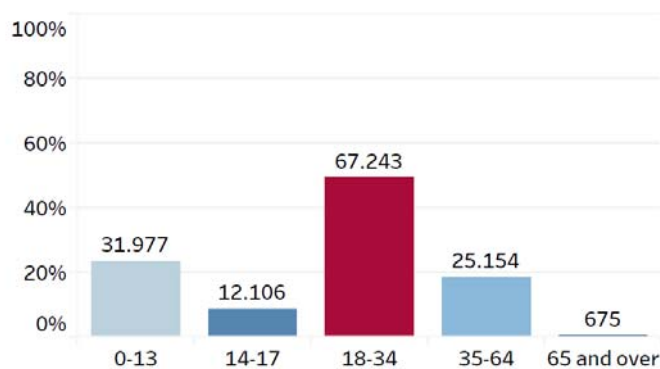
Gender ■ Female ■ Male

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 3: Applications by age range

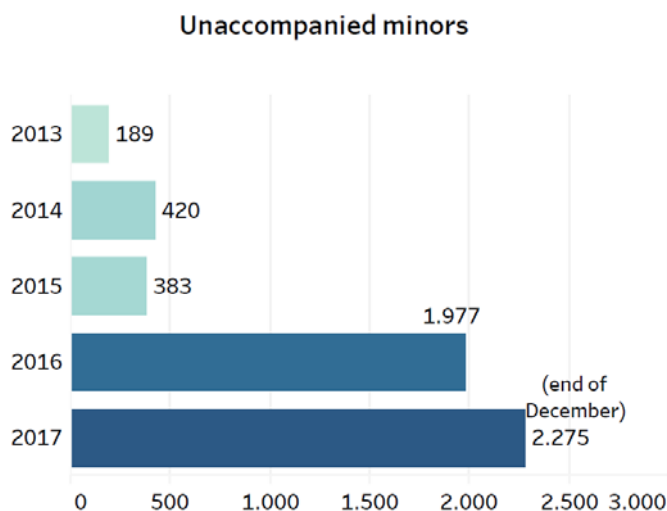
Applications by age range

2013 to 2017 (end of December)



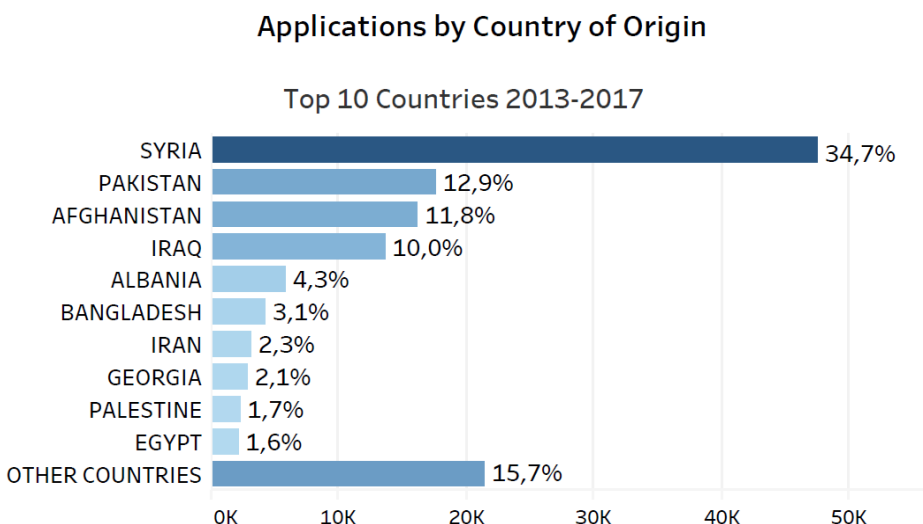
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 4: Unaccompanied minors



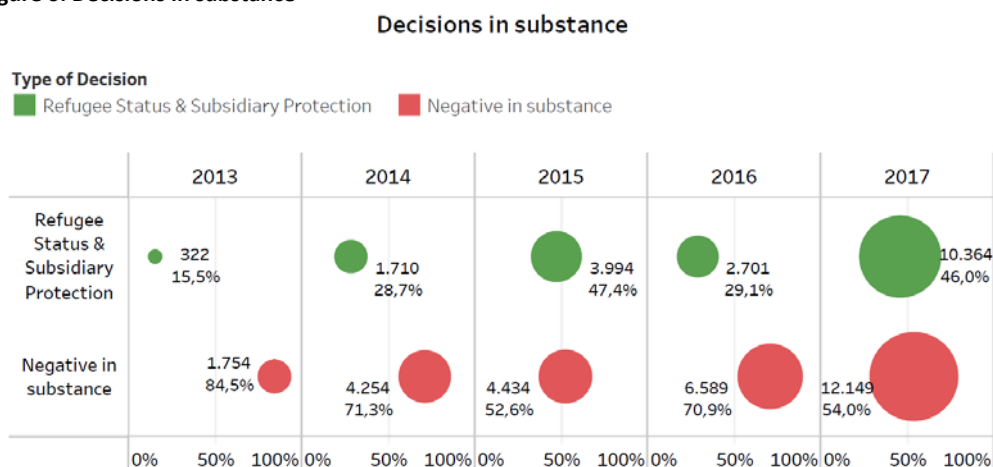
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Graph 5: Applications by Country of Origin



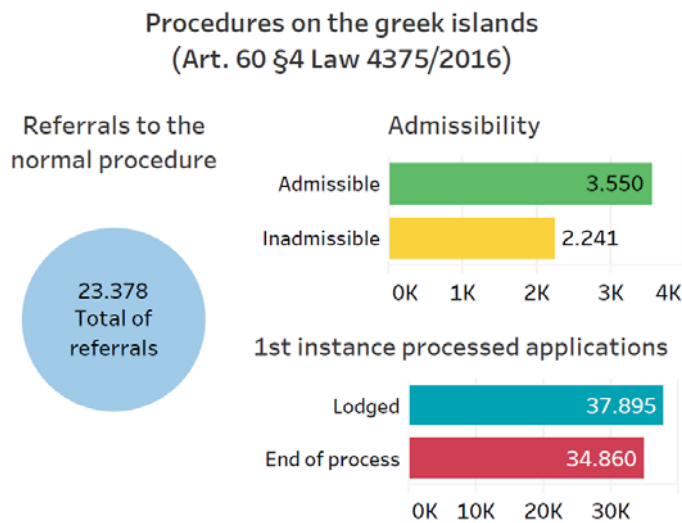
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 6: Decisions in substance



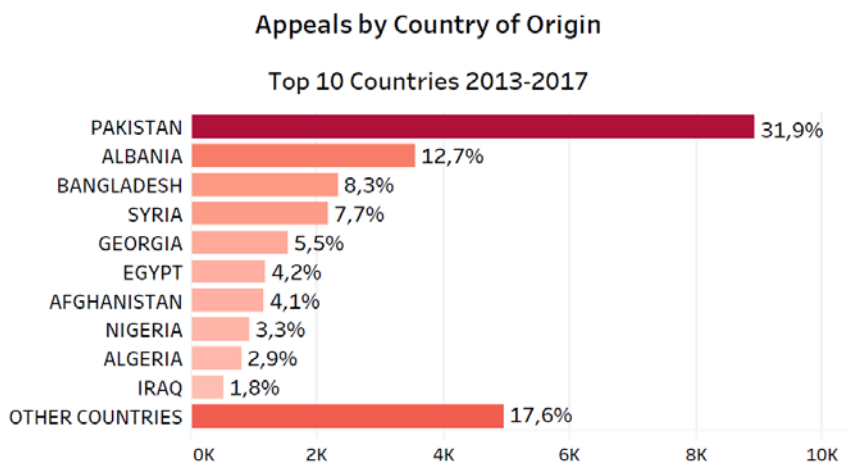
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 7: Procedures on the Greek islands



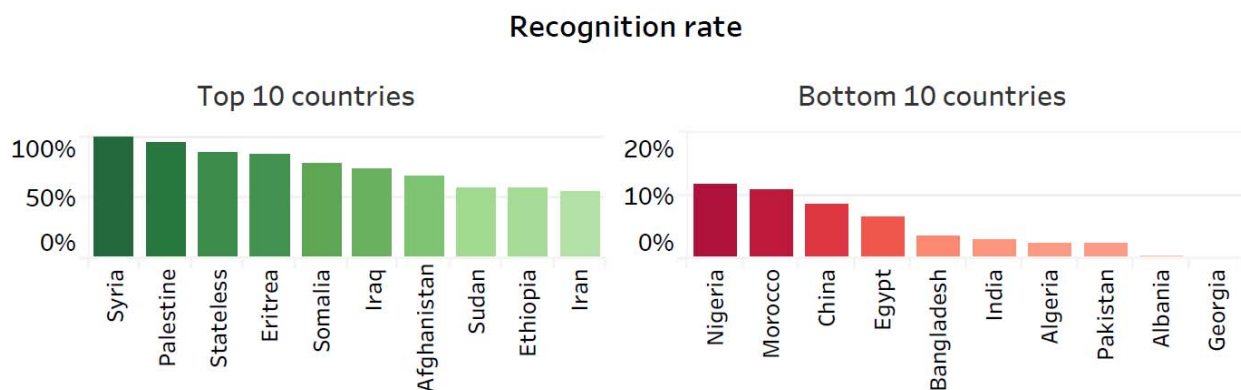
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 8: Appeals by County of Origin



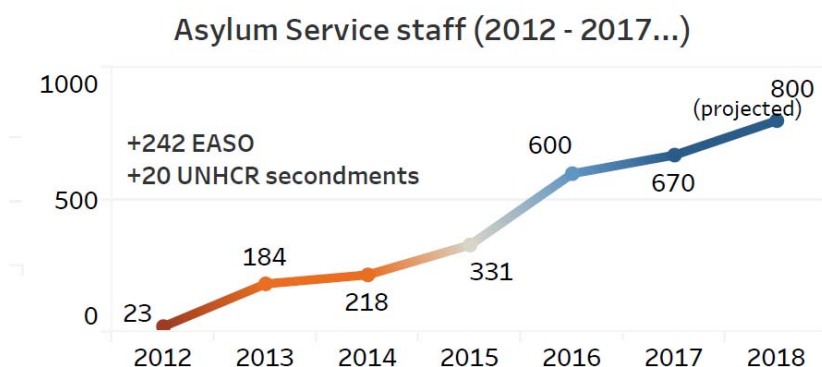
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 9: Recognition rate



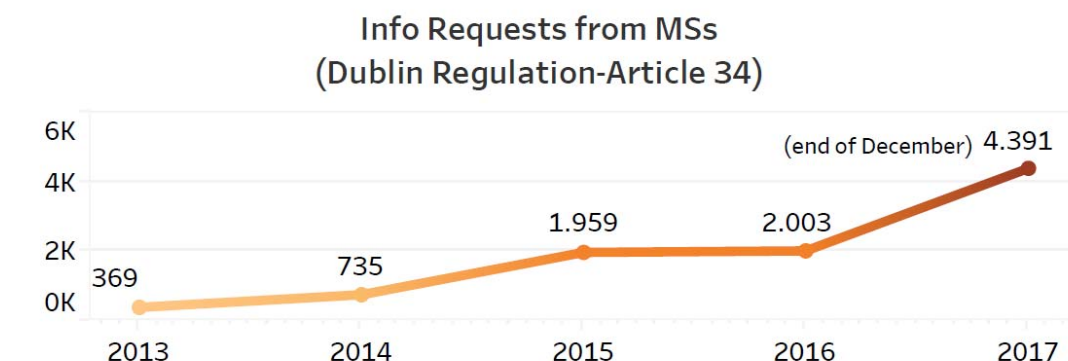
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 10: Asylum Service staff (2012-2017...)



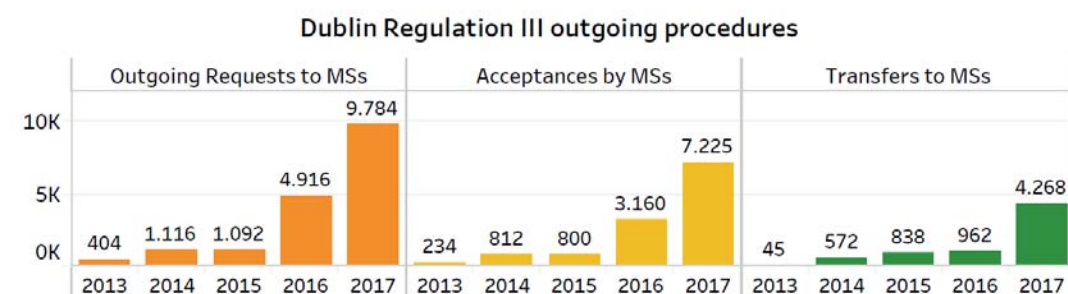
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 11: Info Requests from MSs



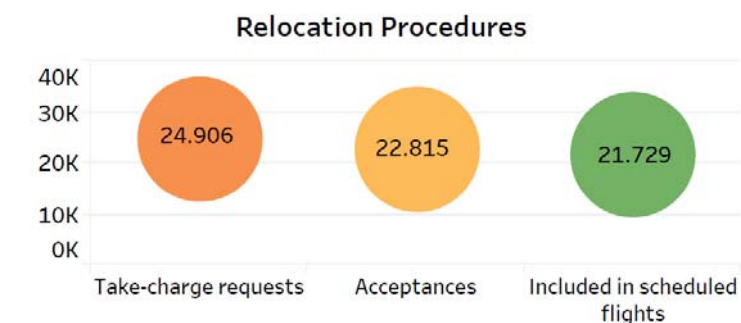
Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 12: Dublin Regulation III outgoing procedure



Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).

Figure 13: Relocation Procedures



Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/12/2017, available at: <http://goo.gl/sV5LW6>).



**Arrivals of flows through sea routes have also been recorded:**

2014: 43.500 sea arrivals<sup>82</sup>. (with a proviso)

2015: 856.723 sea arrivals<sup>83</sup>.

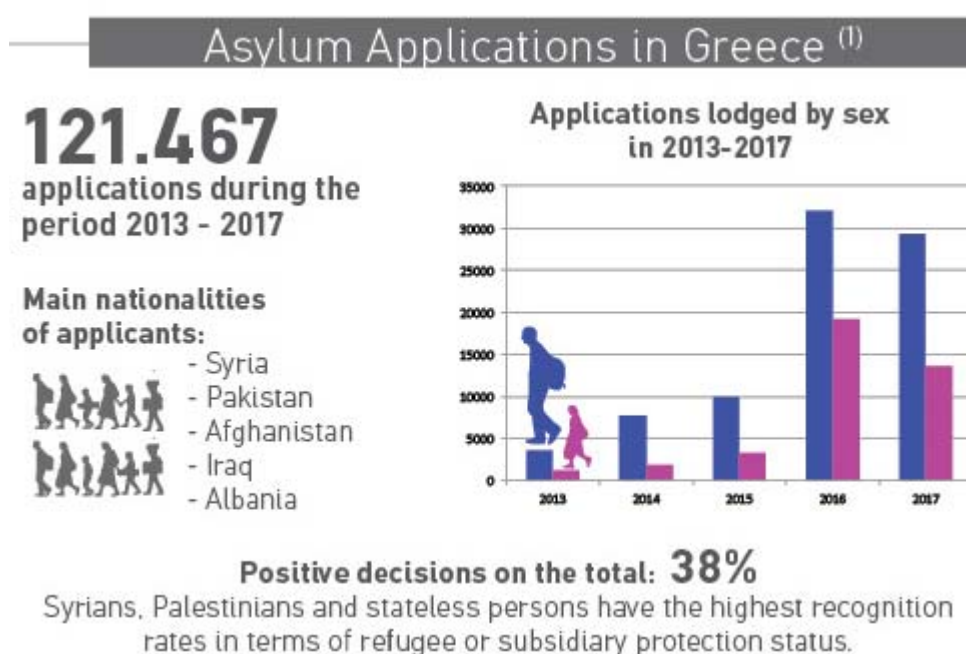
2016: 173.450 sea arrivals<sup>84</sup>.

Following the peak of flows in October 2015, the number of irregular arrivals in Greece decreased, mostly due to the bad weather conditions in the midst of winter months. In addition, the progressive closure of the Balkan route occurred in September 2015, as a result of the closure of the border between Hungary and Serbia and the subsequent construction of a barbed-wire fence along the Hungarian-Serbian and Hungarian-Croatian frontiers, which had already deterred migrants from undertaking the perilous journey through the Aegean Sea. In short, the combined effect of the closure of the Balkan routes and the EU-Turkey Statement resulted in the maintenance of migration across the Aegean Sea at very low levels even during the summer months of 2016.

Also, according to the Reception and Identification Service, the fluctuation in the number of incoming flows of third-country nationals in Greece over the period examined was greatly affected, inter alia, by the EU-Turkey Statement.<sup>85</sup>

**Refugees in Greece 2013-2017**

**Figure 14: Asylum Applications in Greece**



Source: ELIAMEP, 2017 (accessed on: 08/12/2017, available at: <https://goo.gl/wmmX9b>)

**Figure 15: Accommodation**



Source: ELIAMEP, 2017 (accessed on: 08/12/2017, available at: <https://goo.gl/wmmX9b>)

<sup>82</sup> Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/10/560e63626/refugee-sea-arrivals-greece-year-approach-400000.html>.

<sup>83</sup> Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/49921>.

<sup>84</sup> Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>.

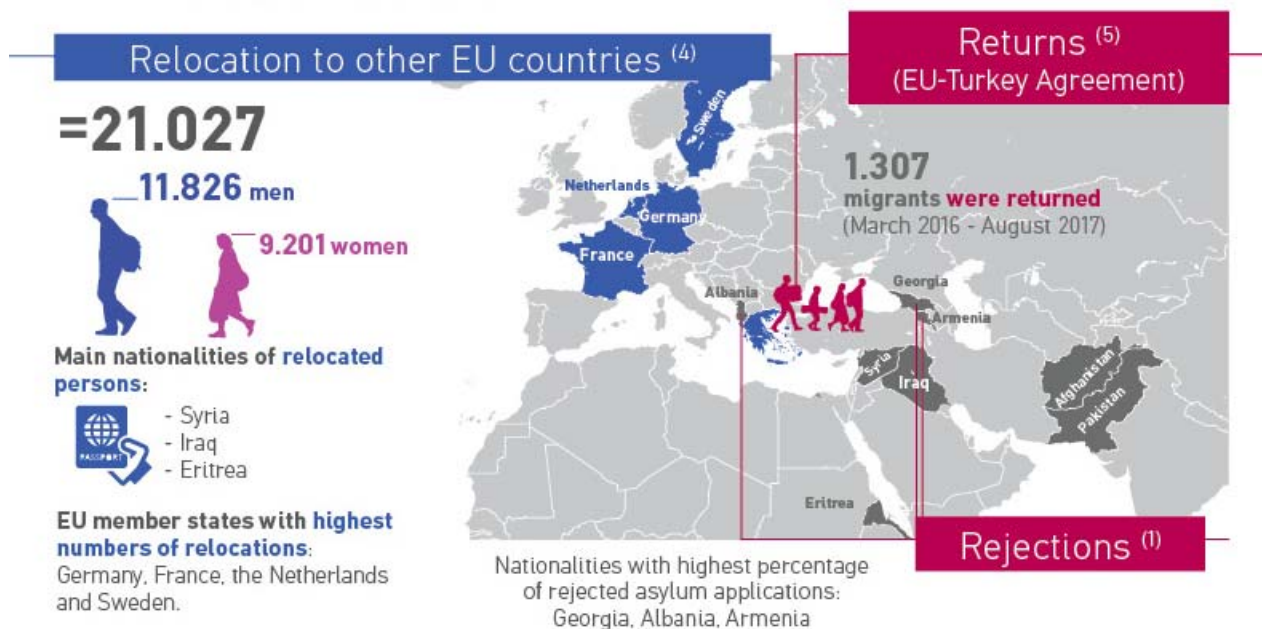
<sup>85</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

Figure 16: Unaccompanied Minors (UAC)



Source: ELIAMEP, 2017 (accessed on: 08/12/2017, available at: <https://goo.gl/wmmX9b>)

Figure 17: Relocation to other EU countries and Returns (EU-Turkey Statement)



Sources: <sup>(1)</sup> Asylum Service (data 7 June 2013 - 30 Sept. 2017) Ministry for Migration Policy. <sup>(2)</sup> EKKA, National Center for Solidarity (data till 15 Oct. 2017). <sup>(3)</sup> UNHCR (data 31/10/2017). <sup>(4)</sup> Asylum Service (data till 22 Oct. 2017) Ministry for Migration Policy. <sup>(5)</sup> UNHCR (data 20 March 2016 - 31 Aug. 2017)

Data processing & design: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy

Source: ELIAMEP, 2017 (accessed on: 08/12/2017, available at: <https://goo.gl/wmmX9b>)

**Q5. If your Member State did not experience a significant fluctuation over 2014-2016 in the number of asylum applications, please elaborate how and if the absence of such a fluctuation has impacted national policies and approaches.**

*Note: only to be filled out if the answer to question Q4 was no.*

**Q6. To what extent was cooperation at national level (i.e. between national organisations and authorities) strengthened over the period 2014-2016 in response to the changing influx in asylum applicants coming to your Member State? How was this achieved?**

As mentioned above, Asylum Service collaborates with major international organizations and agencies. EASO has provided special support to Greece since April 2011 to strengthen the Greek asylum system and manage the increased flows of third-country nationals entering the Greek territory. The support was given in the context of a series of programmes, which included: providing support to a number of priority areas (e.g. the absorption of EU funds and other financial resources), the design and implementation of projects, the training of the staff of the relevant Greek services under the EASO training programme, the Dublin III procedures, the country of origin information (COI), the creation of an effective guardianship system, and the linguistic transcription of interviews<sup>86</sup>.

The pre-registration process, with the financial support of the European Commission, was launched on 8 June by the Asylum Service and was implemented with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). Through this large-scale action, the asylum seeker card was granted to thousands of people. This card allows them to legally stay in the country and have access to health and education services<sup>87</sup>.

The relocation programme was adopted by the European Council in September 2015, not only as part of the shared responsibility of the Member States for dealing with the refugee crisis<sup>88</sup>, but also in the framework of the application of the provisions of the Dublin III Regulation on Family Reunification<sup>89</sup>.

The Asylum Service is the Greek Implementing Authority of this specific programme. The project provides for the transfer and relocation of third-country nationals, who are beneficiaries of international protection, from Greece and Italy to other European countries, taking into account the proportion of their population, the reception States' GDP, the unemployment rates and the number of asylum supplication in their territory<sup>90</sup>.

The Asylum Service is responsible for the registration of applicants, the forward of the requests to other Member States and the notice of the relevant decisions to the applicants. In cooperation with the Hellenic Police, the necessary security checks are carried out in each case. The Asylum Service in cooperation with EASO has developed a new online tool that takes into account any family ties, language skills, cultural ties, or vulnerability, to ensure a transparent and fair process of identifying the relocation state for each applicant participating in the programme, while providing guarantees of smooth future integration. In cooperation with the other partners (EASO, UNHCR), it has developed tools for investigating the best interests of the children, specifically for unaccompanied minors, and has adapted these tools within the framework of the relocation programme<sup>91</sup>.

The First Reception Service, which has been renamed to Reception and Identification Service (RIS), is subjected to the General Secretariat of Reception of the Ministry for Migration Policy. The main mission of the Reception and Identification Service is to effectively carry out the procedures for the reception and identification of third country nationals or stateless persons entering the country without legal formalities, according to Article 8 of Law 4375/2016. The First Reception Service was established by Law 3907/2011, later renamed to Reception and Identification Service, and allowed to continue its operation, as stated by Law 4375/2016<sup>92</sup>.

<sup>86</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EASO\\_press-release-SPP-EL.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EASO_press-release-SPP-EL.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/GR-01.08.2016-Press-Release-end-pre-registration.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> Available at: <https://greece.iom.int/el/news/%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%B3%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CF%89%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%8A%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%AD%CE%BD%CF%89%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85>

<sup>89</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>90</sup> Available at: <https://greece.iom.int/el/news/%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%B3%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CF%89%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%8A%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%AD%CE%BD%CF%89%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85>

<sup>91</sup> Available at: <https://greece.iom.int/el/news/%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%B3%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CF%89%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%8A%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%AD%CE%BD%CF%89%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85>

<sup>92</sup> Available at: <http://www.publicrevenue.gr/elib/view?d=/gr/act/2016/4375>

The Reception and Identification Service is responsible for providing services to third-country nationals who are arrested because they entered the country without legal formalities, as well as to third-country nationals who are arrested because they reside illegally in the country and cannot prove their nationality and identity with any official document. First Reception Procedures include: (a) identity and nationality verification; (b) registration; (c) medical examination for the purpose of any necessary health care and psychosocial support; (d) informing migrants of their rights and obligations and in particular the conditions under which they can be placed under international protection; and (e) the provision of care to those belonging to vulnerable groups, and who will be examined on a case by case basis in the context of the standard procedure<sup>93</sup>.

Reception and Identification Service develops cooperations with European and International Organizations, and participates in actions and programmes funded by the EU and other operators<sup>94</sup>. In particular, the Reception and Identification Service is working together with:

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)<sup>95</sup>
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM)<sup>96</sup>
- The intergovernmental organization Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)<sup>97</sup>
- The European Asylum Support Office (EASO)<sup>98</sup>.

In addition to the aforementioned international bodies, the following European and International Organizations operate at the Reception and Identification Centers:

- Europol, which conducts secondary security audits in RICs (Reception and Identification Centers), while supporting investigations into the dismantling of trafficking and human trafficking circuits.
- Frontex, which is involved in the process of identifying, recording and debriefing.
- FRA, which provides Fundamental Rights assistance and know-how, reports on good practice, and has the right to observe the procedures relating to the different stages of management of persons entering the EU's external borders with any official document.
- The European Commission, which provides financial, technical and operational support and convenes regular meetings of all stakeholders.
- In addition, the Reception and Identification Service cooperates with the Hellenic Police, Coast Guard, Prosecutors<sup>99</sup> and NGOs that meet the appropriate quality standards and provide support in the areas of health, legal assistance, interpreting, support of minors, etc.

<sup>93</sup> Available at: <http://firstreception.gov.gr/news-detail.php?lang=gr&id=19>

<sup>94</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Press\\_release-4-years-HAS\\_ENG1.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Press_release-4-years-HAS_ENG1.pdf)

<sup>95</sup> Available at: <http://www.unhcr.gr/>

<sup>96</sup> Available at: <https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/europa/european-economic-area/greece.html>

<sup>97</sup> Available at: <https://refugeemigrants.un.org/intergovernmental-consultation-migration-asylum-and-refugees-igc>

<sup>98</sup> Available at: <http://easo.europa.eu/>

<sup>99</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

**Q7. To what extent did your Member State consult with other Member States during the period 2014-2016 specifically in regards to dealing with a changing influx? If consultation was followed by cooperation approaches, please explain in which domains cooperation between Member States was most effective?**

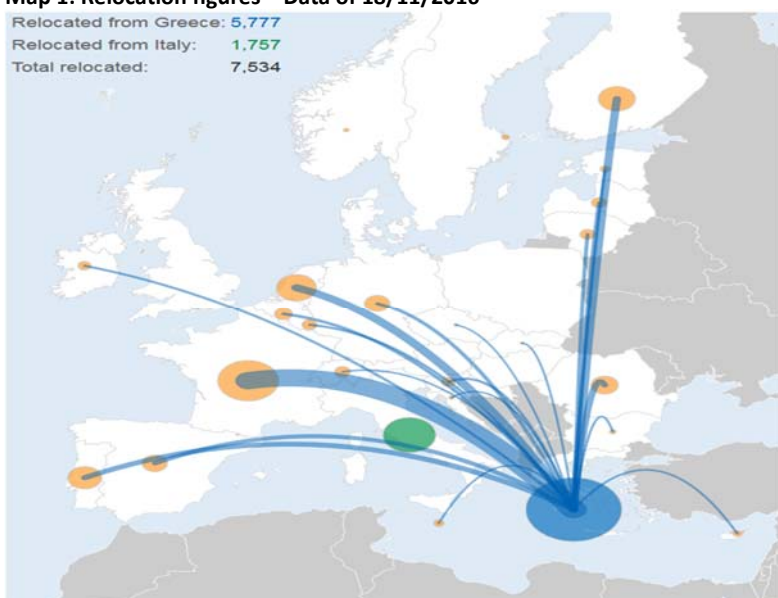
*Please elaborate on such cooperation and its impacts. If relevant, a reference to relocation agreement can be included.*

The Asylum Service has developed close cooperation with most Member States of the European Union as part of the relocation programme of third country nationals, as well as with the International Organization for Migration for the transport of applicants from Greece to other Member States in the context of the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation<sup>100</sup>.

**Relocation of refugees in the EU – Data until 18/11/2016**

Until 18 November 2016, 7534 refugees were relocated from Greece and Italy to other EU member states.<sup>101</sup>:

**Map 1: Relocation figures – Data of 18/11/2016**



Source: Asylum Service, 2016 (accessed on: 08/12/2017, available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/en/?p=1784>).

The Reception and Identification Service is a member of the EASO's Reception Services and in 2016 participated through National Contact Points in meetings with other Member States in which the latest developments in the field of reception were discussed, good practices and information were exchanged, and ways of dealing with the current situation as well as specific incidents were suggested<sup>102</sup>.

- **EASO Asylum Support Team - Bulgaria:** In 2014, the Reception and Identification Service participated in the Asylum Support Team of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in Bulgaria. This participation demonstrates the progress recorded in relation to management issues of mixed migration flows as well as issues related to the organization and operation of the Service<sup>103</sup>.
- **Relocation Programme:** This current emergency relocation programme was adopted in two Council Decisions in September 2015, in which the Member States committed themselves to transferring persons in need of international protection from Italy and Greece. On 8 June 2015, the Commission proposed a European resettlement scheme, in which it was agreed by the Member States on 20 July 2015 to transfer 22.504 persons in need of international protection.
- **EU-Turkey Statement:** The EU-Turkey Statement of March 18, 2016 provides that "for any return of a Syrian to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled by Turkey to the EU, taking into account the UN's vulnerability criteria. A mechanism will be established, with the assistance of the Commission, EU agencies and other Member States, as well as the UNHCR, to ensure that this principle will be implemented as from the same day the returns start. Priority will be given to migrants who have not previously entered or attempted to enter the EU irregularly<sup>104</sup>".

<sup>100</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>101</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/?p=4198>

<sup>102</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>103</sup> Available at: <http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/news-detail.php?type=press&id=3>

<sup>104</sup> Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>



- Eligibility for participation in the relocation programme is limited to applicants who are in clear need of international protection and are a national or stateless resident of those countries for which the EU-wide average recognition rate is more than 75%. The majority of beneficiaries included Syrians, with Eritreans and Iraqis as the second and third largest groups<sup>105</sup>.
- The European Commission on July 13, 2016 also proposed a permanent EU resettlement framework for the establishment of a common set of standard selection procedures and a common protection regime to rationalize European resettlement efforts<sup>106</sup>.

See Statistical Data of the Hellenic Asylum Service – Relocation Procedures (Tables 13-20, pp.34-36).

- **Frontex:** Indicatively: In 2015, Frontex accepted Greece's request to deploy Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT) on the Greek islands in the Aegean to assist the country in dealing with the record number of migrants coming to its shores. Following a required evaluation, Frontex decided to activate the RABIT mechanism<sup>107</sup>.
- **NATO:** NATO Defense Ministers took a decision on 11 February 2016 to deploy ships to the Aegean Sea to support Greece and Turkey, as well as the European Union's border agency Frontex, in their efforts to tackle the refugee and migrant crisis. NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) arrived in the Aegean Sea within 48 hours of the Ministers' decision. It is conducting reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance in the territorial waters of Greece and Turkey, as well as international waters. NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 is deployed in the Aegean Sea to support international efforts to cut the lines of human trafficking and illegal migration. NATO ships are providing real-time information to the coastguards and relevant national authorities of Greece and Turkey, as well as to Frontex, helping them in their efforts to tackle this crisis. 31 ships from 8 different countries participated in NATO's activities in the Aegean. Since February 2016, NATO ships have patrolled more than 10,000 hours. Greeks, Turks and Frontex Liaison Officers have deployed in the context of NATO's Aegean activity, which also allows the exchange of information. Thanks to the information gathered by NATO ships, Greece, Turkey and Frontex take more effective action to break the business model of traffickers and save lives<sup>108</sup>.
- **EASO:** EASO support in Greece dates back to April 2011, when Phase I of the Operational Plan was signed. Greece has faced particular asylum pressures in the past years due to a significant influx of irregular migrants at the European external borders. Following a request made by the Greek Government, in February 2011, EASO agreed to support Greece until March 2013 and to deploy various Asylum Support Teams (ASTs). Since the beginning of the programme, Greece has been supported to strengthen its capacity to cope with the delay in examining asylum cases pending from the old asylum system (before the 2013 Asylum Service is operational). In addition, the creation of a sustainable and effective asylum and reception structure supported First Host Service, Asylum Service, Appeals Authority, and improved reception conditions. On 7 March 2013, EASO and Greece signed the Operating Plan Phase II. The Plan extended EASO support to Greece up until December 2014 in various areas; for example, training for the staff of the new services, support to the backlog committees, and support for improvement of reception procedures and the management of EU funds related to asylum and reception. On 13 May 2015, the EASO and Greece signed a new Support Plan which provided for EASO tailor-made support to Greece until May 2016 and was subsequently amended and extended until 31st of December 2016. In addition, on 30 September 2015, the European Asylum Support Office and Greece signed the Hotspot Operational Plan in Greece. This Plan was amended several times, in order to reflect the operational needs both on the islands and on mainland Greece, taking into account the EU-Turkey Statement, the European Agenda on Migration, and the Hotspot approach and subsequent developments. The plan was extended until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016<sup>109</sup>.
- **Security groups at the border.** Indicatively: Since February 2016, the Netherlands has been providing a Border Security Team to Frontex for deployment to Greece. The Border Security Team (BST) is stationed on the island of Chios. Following the increased influx of immigrants, the BST supports the Greek government with the identification, registration and screening process and assistance in setting up the return process on Chios and Lesbos. The border security team comprises personnel from the Royal Netherlands Navy, the Netherlands Coast Guard, and the Migration and Naturalization Service of Netherlands. The Border Security Teams made their contributions within the framework of a Frontex operation<sup>110</sup>.

<sup>105</sup> Available at: [http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/171109\\_INFORGRAPHIC\\_ENG\\_v8\\_Print\\_final.pdf](http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/171109_INFORGRAPHIC_ENG_v8_Print_final.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52016PC0468&from=EN>

<sup>107</sup> Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/news/frontex-accepts-greece-s-request-for-rapid-border-intervention-teams-amcPjC>.

<sup>108</sup> Available at: [https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/opinions\\_128372.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/opinions_128372.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>109</sup> Available at: [https://www.easo.europa.eu/archive-of-operations?field\\_operation\\_year\\_value=All&field\\_member\\_state\\_value=Greece&field\\_operation\\_type\\_value=All](https://www.easo.europa.eu/archive-of-operations?field_operation_year_value=All&field_member_state_value=Greece&field_operation_type_value=All).

<sup>110</sup> Border Security Teams: <https://goo.gl/eWpkgP>



- **The process of family reunification:** The Directive on the right to Family Reunification establishes common rules for exercising the right to family reunification in 25 EU Member States (excluding the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark). It determines the conditions under which family reunification is granted, establishes procedural guarantees and provides rights for the family members concerned. The Directive applies equally to family relationships established before and after the sponsor arrived in the Member State. Sponsors can bring their spouse, children and the children of their spouse to the country in which they are residing. Member States may choose to authorize reunification with an unmarried partner, adult dependent children, or dependent parents and grandparents<sup>111</sup>. The Family Reunification Directive only applies to legally residing third-country nationals who ask to be reunited with third-country national family members (Council Directive 2003/86/EC)<sup>112</sup>.
- **Humanitarian aid**
- **Dubs scheme for refugee children:** The UK launched a scheme to enable a number of unaccompanied children to come to live safely in the UK, even if they did not have a straightforward family link in the UK. The “Dubs Amendment” was created in April 2016 by Lord Dubs, and intended to bring 3.000 unaccompanied refugee children to Britain from refugee camps in Europe, including Greece<sup>113</sup>.

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<sup>111</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/family-reunification\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/family-reunification_en)

<sup>112</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32003L0086&from=EN>

<sup>113</sup> Dubs amendment: <https://goo.gl/LYcwMm>

Statistical Data of the Greek Asylum Service – Relocation Procedures

Table 13: Relocation – take charge – Requests

Relocation -take charge- Requests	
Gender	Up to 14.1.2018
Men	14051
Women	10855
<b>Total</b>	<b>24906</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

Table 14: Nationalities

Nationalities	Up to 14.1.2018
Syria	19579
Iraq	4214
Eritrea	186
Stateless	231
Yemen	88
Central African Republic	2
Iran	2
Palestine	603
Burundi	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24906</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

Table 15: Age Groups

Age Groups	Up to 14.1.2018	%
0-13	9530	38,3%
14-17	1713	6,9%
18-34	9500	38,1%
35-64	3997	16,0%
65 and over	166	0,7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24906</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

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**Table 16: Relocation Procedures**

Relocation Procedures (up to 14.1.2018 )	
Total number of relocation applications registered by the Asylum Service (up to 14.1.2018 )	27457
Relocation Requests (up to 14.1.2018 ) <sup>1</sup>	24906
Acceptances (up to 14.1.2018 )	22815

<sup>1</sup> Asylum Service does not submit relocation files when either security issues or issues of nationality are in doubt.

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

**Table 17: Implementation of relocation requests analysis**

Implementation of relocation requests analysis									
Member States	Pledges (by MSR)	Number of Relocation Requests by GAS	Pending Answers	Rejections	Approvals	Relocated Persons	Persons with pending relocation	Persons who absconded relocation	Persons with Explicit Withdrawals
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	1055	746	0	4	720	700	0	18	0
Bulgaria	960	271	0	47	187	50	0	27	45
Croatia	225	62	0	0	62	60	0	1	0
Cyprus	160	143	0	4	120	96	0	6	7
Czech Republic	30	31	0	16	15	12	0	3	0
Estonia	382	321	0	171	150	141	0	5	0
Finland	1349	1287	0	38	1237	1202	0	32	0
France	5770	5174	0	510	4473	4394	0	84	3
Germany	6740	5895	21	100	5433	5371	17	38	0
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	1132	1113	0	68	1034	755	264	5	5
Latvia	363	342	0	24	318	294	0	7	3
Liechtenstein	10	13	0	0	10	10	0	0	0
Lithuania	1070	488	0	75	396	355	0	18	5
Luxembourg	298	337	0	33	304	300	0	3	0
Malta	138	120	0	14	106	101	0	3	0
Netherlands	1950	1862	0	65	1787	1754	1	19	7
Norway	685	718	0	9	706	693	0	13	0
Poland	65	73	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
Portugal	2030	1275	0	14	1254	1192	0	33	13
Romania	1172	924	0	12	903	683	0	72	40
Slovakia	50	40	0	21	19	16	0	0	0
Slovenia	349	179	0	0	172	172	0	0	0
Spain	1875	1154	0	2	1149	1123	1	12	3
Sweden	2378	1682	0	7	1665	1656	0	6	0
Switzerland	600	656	0	58	595	580	0	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30836</b>	<b>24906</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1292</b>	<b>22815</b>	<b>21710</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>149</b>

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

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**Table 18: Relocation Procedures Overview**

Relocation Procedures Overview			Relocation - Takecharge- Requests	Acceptances- Rejections	Closures Total(*)	Closures after Acceptance(**)	Transfers	Pending Decision	Pending Closure
2015	12/10/2015	31/12/2015	577	158	121	102	82	400	438
2016	1/1/2016	31/12/2016	12900	11432	8019	7693	7192	1542	4654
2017	1/1/2017	31/12/2017	11429	12517	15163	14730	14430	21	311
Week 117	1/1/2018	7/1/2018	0	0	0	0	0	21	311
Week 118	8/1/2018	14/1/2018	0	0	7	7	6	21	304
<b>Total</b>			<b>24906</b>	<b>24107</b>	<b>23310</b>	<b>22532</b>	<b>21710</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>304</b>

(\*) Closures of the relocation case due to specific reasons (Implemented Transfer, Abscondment, Opt for examination by GR, Missing Family Members, Medical Reasons, Death of the Applicant, Return to country of origin, Explicit Withdrawals, Other reasons)

(\*\*) Closures of the relocation case after the issuance of an acceptance decision by the M-S (including implemented transfers)

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

**Table 19: Pledges, relocation -take charge- requests, acceptances, rejections, applicants included in scheduled flights,**

Pledges	Relocation -take charge- Requests	Acceptances	Rejections	Relocation Applicants Included in Scheduled Flights	Dublin Associated Family Members of Applicants Included in Scheduled Flights (*)
30836	24906	22815	1292	21729	22

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

**Table 20: Implemented Relocation Transfers**

Implemented Relocation Transfers (Up to 14.1.2018 )	
Men	12191
Women	9519
<b>Total</b>	<b>21710</b>

(\*) Family Members associated with Relocation Applicants according to Dublin Regulation Provisions of Family Reunification.

Source: Asylum Service, 2017 (accessed on 25/01/2018, available at: <http://goo.gl/X1ctAc>).

**Q8. To what extent did measures taken in neighbouring Member States (or other EU Member States in general) have an effect on your Member State's policies and practices, even if your Member State did not experience a change in the influx?**

Please refer to both increase and decrease.

Closure of the border (Bulgaria) The closure of the border by the countries of the Western Balkan corridor in February 2016 resulted in the "entrapment" of thousands of asylum seekers in Greece. The Asylum Service has addressed this emergency situation by implementing the inland pre-registrants' programme in cooperation with UNHCR and EASO<sup>114</sup>.

- **Closure of borders (Bulgaria-FYROM):** The imposition of border restrictions and the subsequent closure of the Western Balkan route in March 2016 resulted in the entrapment of a number of thousands of third-country nationals in Greece, and created inter alia an unprecedented burden on the Greek reception system.
- **Relocation Programme:** This current emergency relocation programme was adopted in two Council decisions in September 2015, in which the Member States committed themselves to transferring persons in need of international protection from Italy and Greece. On June 8, 2015, the Commission proposed a European relocation programme, in which it was agreed by the Member States to transfer 22.504 people with a clear need for international protection on July 20, 2015. For more information, see Q7.
- **Resettlement:** Resettlement means the admission of third country nationals in need of international protection, who have been displaced from or within their country of nationality, into the territory of the Member States for the purpose of granting them international protection. The same applies to stateless persons in need of international protection displaced from or within their country of former habitual residence. The EU Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016 provides that for every Syrian being returned from Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU. This principle applies as of 4 April 2016. Priority is given to migrants who have not previously entered or tried to enter the EU irregularly. The Commission on 13 July 2016 proposed a permanent EU Resettlement Framework to establish a common set of standard selection procedures and a common protection status to streamline European resettlement efforts. The Commission aims to create a more structured, harmonised, and permanent framework for resettlement across the Union, building on existing experiences. Such framework to guide future resettlement efforts in the Union is needed, as the current absence of a more robust and collective Union approach to resettlement hampers the Union's capacity to achieve its policy objectives.
- **EU-Turkey Statement:** In March 2016, the EU and Turkey agreed to a declaration tackling illegal migration following the mass influx of migrants into the EU. From March 20, 2016, all new irregular arrivals of third-country nationals arriving in the Greek islands will be returned to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum, or if their application is rejected. For all Syrians returning to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will settle in the EU. The elements set out in the statement constitute temporary and extraordinary measures, necessary to end human suffering and restore public order. The implementation is taking place in full accordance with EU and international law, excluding any kind of collective expulsion. Turkey will take tougher measures to prevent new sea or land routes for irregular migration opening up from Turkey to the EU. In return, the EU will speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated €3 billion to address the immediate humanitarian and development needs of refugees in Turkey. The EU also committed to mobilise additional funding up to €3 billion by the end of 2018<sup>115</sup>.
- **In order to break the business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative so as not to putting their lives at risk, the EU and Turkey decided to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU. In order to achieve this goal, the following additional action points were agreed:** "1) All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands as from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey. This will take place in full accordance with EU and international law, thus excluding any kind of collective expulsion. All migrants will be protected in accordance with the relevant international standards and in respect of the principle of non-refoulement. It will be a temporary and extraordinary measure which is necessary to end the human suffering and restore public order. Migrants arriving in the Greek islands will be duly registered and any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive, in cooperation with UNHCR. Migrants not applying for asylum or whose application has been found unfounded or inadmissible in accordance with the said directive will be returned to Turkey. Turkey and Greece, assisted by EU institutions and agencies, will take the necessary steps and agree on any necessary bilateral arrangements, including the presence of Turkish officials on Greek islands and Greek officials in Turkey as from 20 March 2016, to ensure liaison and thereby facilitate the smooth functioning of these arrangements. The costs of the return operations of irregular migrants will be covered by the EU. 2) For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU taking into account the UN Vulnerability Criteria. A mechanism will be established, with the assistance of the Commission, EU agencies and other Member States, as well as the UNHCR, to ensure that this principle will be implemented as from the same day the returns start. Priority will be given to migrants who have not previously entered or tried to enter the EU irregularly. On the EU side, resettlement under this mechanism will take place, in the first instance, by honouring the commitments taken by Member States in the conclusions of Representatives of the Governments of Member States meeting within the Council on 20 July 2015, of which 18.000 places for resettlement remain. Any further need for resettlement will be carried out through a similar voluntary arrangement up to a limit of an additional 54.000 persons. The Members of the European Council welcome the Commission's intention to propose an amendment to the relocation decision of 22 September 2015 to allow for any resettlement commitment undertaken in the framework of this arrangement to be offset from non-allocated places under the decision. Should these arrangements not meet the objective of ending the irregular migration and the number of returns come close to the numbers provided for above, this mechanism will be reviewed. Should the number of

<sup>114</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>115</sup> Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/el/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>

returns exceed the numbers provided for above, this mechanism will be discontinued. 3) Turkey will take any necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for illegal migration opening from Turkey to the EU, and will cooperate with neighbouring states as well as the EU to this effect. 4) Once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU are ending or at least have been substantially and sustainably reduced, a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme will be activated. EU Member States will contribute on a voluntary basis to this scheme. 5) The fulfilment of the visa liberalisation roadmap will be accelerated vis-à-vis all participating Member States with a view to lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens at the latest by the end of June 2016, provided that all benchmarks have been met. To this end Turkey will take the necessary steps to fulfil the remaining requirements to allow the Commission to make, following the required assessment of compliance with the benchmarks, an appropriate proposal by the end of April on the basis of which the European Parliament and the Council can make a final decision. 6) The EU, in close cooperation with Turkey, will further speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated 3 billion euros under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey and ensure funding of further projects for persons under temporary protection identified with swift input from Turkey before the end of March. A first list of concrete projects for refugees, notably in the field of health, education, infrastructure, food and other living costs, that can be swiftly financed from the Facility, will be jointly identified within a week. Once these resources are about to be used to the full, and provided the above commitments are met, the EU will mobilise additional funding for the Facility of an additional 3 billion euro up to the end of 2018. 7) The EU and Turkey welcomed the ongoing work on the upgrading of the Customs Union. 8) The EU and Turkey reconfirmed their commitment to re-energize the accession process as set out in their joint statement of 29 November 2015. They welcomed the opening of Chapter 17 on 14 December 2015 and decided, as a next step, to open Chapter 33 during the Netherlands presidency. They welcomed that the Commission will put forward a proposal to this effect in April. Preparatory work for the opening of other Chapters will continue at an accelerated pace without prejudice to Member States' positions in accordance with the existing rules. 9) The EU and its Member States will work with Turkey in any joint endeavour to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria, in particular in certain areas near the Turkish border which would allow for the local population and refugees to live in areas which will be more safe<sup>116</sup>.

- **Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation:** Readmission agreements aim to control the return of irregular migrants to country of origin or transit by establishing obligations and procedures between the contracting parties. The main objective is to establish reciprocal procedures for the rapid and orderly readmission of the persons entering or residing in the territory of the other side in an irregular manner. The 2014 Readmission Agreement between the European Union and Turkey includes provisions related both to the readmission of the nationals of the EU Member States and Turkey, and to the readmission of any other persons (including the third country nationals and the stateless persons) that entered into, or stayed on, the territory of either side directly arriving from the territory of the other side. According to this agreement, when requested so<sup>117</sup>, Turkey will have to take back its own nationals and the nationals of the third countries coming directly from Turkey and reaching EU territory, if those persons have entered or are residing in the territory of the EU in an irregular manner. A necessary condition is that there is mutual agreement on the existence of sufficient evidence<sup>118</sup>.

<sup>116</sup> Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>

<sup>117</sup> Available at: [https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/news/uploads/Q-A\\_EU-Turkey-Readmission-Agreement.doc](https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/news/uploads/Q-A_EU-Turkey-Readmission-Agreement.doc) and at: <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/news/eu-turkey-readmission-agreement-ratified-european-union-step-towards-visa-liberalisation-1939>

<sup>118</sup> Available at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:22014A0507\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:22014A0507(01))



- **Family reunification procedure:** The Directive on the right to Family Reunification establishes common rules for exercising the right to family reunification in 25 EU Member States (excluding the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark). It determines the conditions under which family reunification is granted, establishes procedural guarantees and provides rights for the family members concerned. The Directive applies equally to family relationships established before and after the sponsor arrived in the Member State. Sponsors can bring their spouse, children and the children of their spouse to the country in which they are residing. Member States may choose to authorize reunification with an unmarried partner, adult dependent children, or dependent parents and grandparents<sup>119</sup>. The Family Reunification Directive only applies to legally residing third-country nationals who ask to be reunited with third-country national family members (Council Directive 2003/86/EC)<sup>120</sup>.
- **Dubs scheme for refugee children:** The UK launched a scheme to enable a number of unaccompanied children to come to live safely in the UK, even if they did not have a straightforward family link in the UK. The “Dubs Amendment” was created in April 2016 by Lord Dubs (Labour peer), and intended to bring 3.000 unaccompanied refugee children to Britain from refugee camps in Europe, including Greece<sup>121</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/family-reunification\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/family-reunification_en)

<sup>120</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32003L0086&from=EN>

<sup>121</sup> Dubs amendment: <https://goo.gl/LYcwMm>

## Section 2: Overview of the national responses over 2014-2016

The purpose of this second section is to provide a detailed overview of the responses of the Member States to the fluctuations of number of asylum applications over the period 2014 to 2016.

This Section should be completed only by Member States who experienced a change in the influx of asylum applications.

It first starts with a table where NCPs are asked to indicate the specific area where measures were taken and which was impacted as a result (Q9). This is a short overview of table to understand which areas were impacted by the various Member States. The question that follows (Q10) maps in detail the specific details of each of the measures taken.

### 2.1. Measures taken, their impact and responses to the changing influx in member states that experienced a change in the influx of asylum applicants

**Q9. Please indicate in the table below which specific areas were impacted by a change in the influx of asylum applicants in your (Member State) that your Member State identified. Please specify further in the column 'Explanation' whether information provided relate to an increased or to a decrease in the influx.**

Additional details on the measures are requested in the tables below under question 10. Therefore please only briefly highlight all measures taken.

Area	Directly impacted (yes/no)	Time period (when)	Very brief explanation on the basis of short titles (how and what the impact was, including whether it concerned an increase/decrease)
1. <b>Border control</b> (please specify if it refers to external border control, temporary control at internal borders and/or police controls in border areas)	Police <sup>122</sup>	2015-2016	Given the increase in the influx of migrants and refugees in 2015-2016: data provided in Q1. EURODAC EUROPOL Frontex NATO Coast Guard
2. <b>Reception centres/accommodation arrangements and other housing</b>	Yes	2015-2016	Reception and Identification Service Reception and Identification Centers Rental Accommodation Scheme for Asylum Seekers in Greece Municipality of Athens-UNHCR temporary accommodation scheme for refugees Municipality of Livadia-UNHCR accommodation for Relocation Project Thessaloniki Municipality--UNHCR refugee housing agreement Except for the reception and identification centers, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry for Migration Policy may, by joint decision, establish open reception facilities for asylum seekers <sup>123</sup> , as well as open temporary accommodation facilities for persons subject to return procedures or whose return is suspended <sup>124</sup> . A number of temporary camps have been created in the mainland in order to increase accommodation capacity, mainly by the Hellenic Army. Placement in these camps takes place after submitting a referral to the Central Operational Body for Migration (KEPOM) under the Ministry of Migration Policy and Ministry of Defence.

<sup>122</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>123</sup> Article 10(3), L. 4375/2016.

<sup>124</sup> Article 10(4), L. 4375/2016.

<p>3. <b>Wider reception services</b> (social services, health services), <b>rights afforded to applicants</b></p>			<p>Law 4375/2016<sup>125</sup> “On the organization and operation of the Asylum Service, the Appeals Authority, the Reception and Identification Service, the establishment of the General Secretariat for Reception, the transposition into Greek legislation of the provisions of Directive 2013/32/EC “on common procedures for granting and withdrawing the status of international protection (recast) (L 180/29.6.2013), provisions on the employment of beneficiaries of international protection and other provisions”, inter alia, includes provisions on the conditions, rights and obligations for incoming third country nationals – beneficiaries of international protection. More specifically, they are listed on the official site of the Asylum Service as follows: The Asylum Service, in its mission, is responsible in particular for:</p> <p>“As an applicant for international protection in Greece:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It is forbidden to be expelled until the examination of your application has been completed.</i></li> <li>• <i>You can circulate freely in the country unless a specific part of the country in which you are allowed to move is given in your pass.</i></li> <li>• <i>If you do not have a roof, you can ask to be hosted at a Hosting Center or other place. Your request will be accepted if there are seats available.</i></li> <li>• <i>You have the right to work under the conditions laid down by Greek law.</i></li> <li>• <i>You have the same insurance rights and obligations as an employee, such as Greek citizens.</i></li> <li>• <i>You have free medical and hospital care if you are uninsured and needy.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your children have access - and you if you are a minor - to free public education.</i></li> <li>• <i>You have access to vocational training.</i></li> <li>• <i>If you are a person with a disability of 67% and above, you are entitled to a disability allowance if you cannot stay at a Hosting Center.</i></li> <li>• <i>As an applicant for international protection you cannot travel outside of Greece.</i></li> <li>• <i>As an applicant for international protection, you cannot bring your family to Greece from your country of origin.</i></li> <li>• <i>Obligations of applicants for international protection</i></li> <li>• <i>As an applicant for international protection in Greece, you have an obligation:</i></li> <li>• <i>Stay in Greece until your application is completed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Work with the Greek authorities on any matter related to your application and identification of your identity.</i></li> </ul>
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<sup>125</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/N.4375.pdf>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to the Asylum Service yourself to renew your ticket before it expires and at the latest on the next working day after its expiration.</li> <li>• Inform the Asylum Service immediately about your home address and contact details and any changes you may have. The Asylum Service will send to your address the documents related to your application.</li> <li>• Observe the deadlines set by you at the various stages of the examination process of your application.</li> <li>• Disclose your real financial situation if you are enjoying benefits from the State.</li> <li>• Comply with your obligations if you are housed in a Hospitality Center or other venue<sup>126</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>The Reception and Identification Service operates at Directorate level and has the main task of effectively implementing the procedures for the reception and identification of third country nationals or stateless persons entering the country without legal formalities. To this end, the Reception and Identification Service shall be responsible:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To carry out the procedures for recording, identifying and verifying data, for medical examination, for identifying vulnerable persons, for providing information, in particular on procedures for international or other protection, and for return procedures, and for the temporary residence of citizens third countries or stateless persons entering the country without the legal formalities and their further referral to appropriate reception or temporary accommodation facilities,</li> <li>b. For the establishment, operation and supervision of Centers and Structures for the implementation of these procedures.</li> <li>c. For the establishment, operation and supervision of open Temporary Hospitalization Structures of third-country nationals or stateless persons who have applied for international protection"</li> <li>d. "For the establishment, operation and supervision of open Temporary Hospitalization Structures of third-country nationals or stateless persons who are either in the return, expulsion or readmission procedure pursuant to Article 22 of Law 3907/2011 (A 7) or pursuant to paragraph 3 of this article in conjunction with Article 30 of Law 3907/2011, or are deferred removal, according to article 24 of Law 3907/2011 Government Gazette 1207 are either subject to the provisions of articles 76 (5) or 78 or 78A of Law 3386/2005 (A 212)<sup>127</sup>.</li> </ol>
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<sup>126</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/?page\\_id=115](http://asylo.gov.gr/?page_id=115)

<sup>127</sup> Available at: [http://www.immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/0/4375\\_16.pdf/b22df40c-4de2-4c91-9f16-be91d25fb9cf](http://www.immigration.gov.gr/documents/20182/0/4375_16.pdf/b22df40c-4de2-4c91-9f16-be91d25fb9cf)

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA)</li> <li>Hospitality structures for unaccompanied minors</li> <li>Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention (HCDCP)</li> <li>Training, Coordination and Monitoring of Refugee Education, Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs</li> <li>Committee for the Support of Children of Refugees of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs</li> </ul>
<b>4. Registration process of the asylum seeker</b>		2015-2016	In the Reception and Identification Service, third-country nationals express their wish to seek asylum and then refer to the Asylum Service <sup>128</sup> .
<b>5. Asylum procedure</b> (at first and second instance)	Yes	Summer-Autumn 2015  February 2016  March 20, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refugee and Migration Crisis - Mass influx of third-country nationals, mainly Syrians</li> <li>Following the closure of the countries of the Western Balkans in February 2016, there was a sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers</li> <li>Implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement- After 20 March 2016, despite the reduction in total arrivals of third-country nationals, there has been a sharp increase in applicants for international protection<sup>129</sup></li> <li>Appeals Authority: By Law 4375/2016, as amended by Law 4399/2016, the new Appeal Authority is established as a stand-alone Office directly attached to the Minister of the Interior and already to the Minister of Immigration Policy.</li> <li>Law 4375/2016</li> <li>EU-Turkey Statement</li> <li>EASO</li> <li>Safe third country concept</li> <li>Law on the change of composition of Secondary Asylum Committees</li> </ul>
<b>6. Infrastructure, personnel and competencies of the responsible authorities</b>	Yes	From the summer of 2015 to the present	Particularly increased needs for logistics and skilled human resources, the Asylum Service <sup>130</sup> and the Reception and Identification Service <sup>131</sup>
<b>7. Law enforcement</b>	Yes	2016	See Q1.
<b>8. Integration measures for asylum applicants</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA in Greek)</li> <li>Shelters for unaccompanied children</li> <li>Social Security Number (AMKA in Greek)</li> <li>Training, Coordination and Monitoring of Refugee Education, Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs</li> </ul>

<sup>128</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee for the Support of Children of Refugees of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs</li> <li>• Rental Accommodation Scheme for Asylum Seekers in Greece</li> <li>• Municipality of Athens temporary accommodation scheme for refugees</li> <li>• Municipality of Livadia-UNCHR accommodation for Relocation Project</li> <li>• Thessaloniki Municipality--UNCHR refugee housing agreement</li> <li>• Access to social services such as interpretation and provide basic medical, legal and psycho-social support</li> <li>• Cash card assistance programme in Greece</li> <li>• L. 4375/2015</li> <li>• Access to the labor market for asylum seekers</li> <li>• Access to primary health facilities.</li> <li>• Children of asylum seekers have free public education</li> <li>• Applicants have free legal support before the second exam</li> <li>• People with disabilities over 67% are entitled to an allowance if they have not been granted housing and are entitled to apply for housing if there are vacancies</li> <li>• And right to access to the labor market<sup>132</sup></li> </ul>
<b>9. Other, please specify</b>			

<sup>132</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.



**Q10. Fill out the table below on specific elements of the measures indicated in the previous table. Note that numerous questions are simply to establish the typology of the measure, and only the selected options need to be indicated (such as rows a) and b)). Further details are provided from row c), with a general explanation in row e).**

Please copy the entire table below for to provide an overview of additional measures. There is no limit for numbers of measures to be included, as long as they are coherent with the requested information.

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Please select the area corresponding to those highlighted in Q9 by removing the lines that do not apply:</b> 1. <u>Border control</u> 2. <u>Reception centres</u> / accommodation arrangements and other housing 3. <u>Wider reception services</u> (social services, health services), rights afforded to applicants 4. <u>Registration process</u> of the asylum seeker 5. <u>Asylum procedure</u> (at first and second instance) 6. <u>Infrastructure</u> , personnel and competencies of the responsible authorities 7. <u>Law enforcement</u> 8. <u>Integration measures for asylum applicants</u> 9. <u>Other, please specify</u>	
	α) a) Year and month the measure was established	2013
	α) b) <b>Typology of measures</b> (please indicate which of the options apply)	
	Measure following an <u>increase</u> or <u>decrease</u> in numbers	Reception Centers at the land border in the Evros area, Mobile Reception Units and Host and Identification Centers <sup>133</sup>
	<u>New measure</u> or <u>change to an existing measure</u>	
	<u>Structural</u> or <u>ad-hoc</u> (temporary) measure	Mobile Units for Emergency Response to Increased Incoming Flows of Third-Country Citizens, by the Reception and Identification Service. <sup>134</sup> Pre-recording of asylum requests, in the hinterland from the Asylum Service. Implementation of the relocation programme by Asylum Service <sup>135</sup> .

<sup>133</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>134</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017. See Statistical Data of the Greek Asylum Service (from 07/06/2013 to 31/12/2017: <http://goo.gl/Twmagg>, Relocation procedures (until 14/01/2018, see: <http://goo.gl/JrgLQ9>), Dublin stats (until 30/11/2017, see: <http://goo.gl/cHn5Ja>) and Preregistration data (2017, see: <http://goo.gl/M9z6bS>). See also: The work of the Asylum Service in 2017: <http://goo.gl/LimWuA>.

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	Type of measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>(National) Action plan</u></li> <li>- <u>Legislative instruments</u></li> <li>- Specific interinstitutional / multi-agency <u>working group</u> on the situation</li> <li>- <u>Soft measures</u> (handbooks, circulars, policy guidance)</li> <li>- <u>Resources</u> (staff or financing)</li> <li>- <u>Emergency/contingency plan</u></li> <li>- Other, please specify</li> </ul>	<p>The First Reception Service and then continued to function as a Reception and Identification Service and the Asylum Service was established by Law 370/2011<sup>136</sup>.</p> <p>Host and international protection services to third-country nationals follow European standards and, in particular, follow the European Migration Agenda's actions<sup>137</sup>.</p> <p>Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on the requirements for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast)<sup>138</sup></p> <p>Law 4375/2016 for the accelerated procedure at the border, art. 60, par. 4. Provisions for the participation of the EASO experts in the asylum procedure by Law 4375/2016, amendments to relevant provisions by Law 4399/2016 Art. 86, and Joint Ministerial Decision 13257/2016 - Government Gazette 3455 / B / 26-10-2016<sup>139</sup>.</p> <p>Legal assistance in the second degree, Law 4375/2016</p> <p>Calls and recruitment of fixed-term contract employees and funding of Asylum Service from AMIF as well as travel - staff transfers<sup>140</sup></p> <p>The operation of YPYT was also funded by the AMIF, ISF funds and through emergency assistance,<sup>141</sup></p>
	<b>Other elements</b>	
	a) General aim of the measure (what was intended?)	
	b) Intended and actual duration of the measure	
	c) Key elements of the measure (description of the measure)	
	d) Authorities involved in <u>drafting</u> the measure	
	e) Authorities involved in <u>proposing and approving</u> of each measure	
	f) Authorities implementing measures	Reception and Identification Service, Asylum Service, Hellenic Police, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Organization for Migration and Civil Society Organizations <sup>142</sup> .

<sup>136</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/3907.pdf>

<sup>137</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>138</sup> Available at: [http://www.opengov.gr/vpes/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/10/keimeno\\_odigias.pdf](http://www.opengov.gr/vpes/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/10/keimeno_odigias.pdf)

<sup>139</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>142</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

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	g) Other	
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**Q11. To what extent were any of the measures put in place by non-state entities mandated by a government authority via funding or project/by law/by measure?**

*Please elaborate further..*

Area	Extent of involvement of non-state entities (if yes, to what extent)
<b>Border control</b> <i>(please specify if it refers to external border control, temporary control at internal borders and/or police controls in border areas)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frontex</li> <li>• EASO</li> <li>• METAdrasi (cultural mediators)</li> <li>• Medicine du Monde and Medin (medical screening)</li> <li>• and identification of vulnerable people)</li> </ul>
<b>Reception centres / accommodation arrangements and other housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon a request of Greece, the European Civil Protection Mechanism was activated on 3 December 2015. In response, 20 different European countries have offered more than 200,000 relief items, such as tents, beds, sleeping bags, blankets, hygiene kits and power generators. By July 2017, the European Commission has awarded emergency support contracts totaling €401million to its humanitarian aid partners in Greece, such as UN bodies, the Red Cross/Crescent movement and NGOs. The funding covers the delivery of primary healthcare, psycho-social care, improved hygiene conditions and shelter (including in apartments) for those in need, care for unaccompanied minors, as well as informal education and a cash voucher scheme for refugees stranded in Greece</li> <li>• In November 2015, UNHCR started implementing a project on accommodation for relocation candidates ("Accommodation for Relocation") through its own funds. Following a Delegation Agreement signed between the European Commission and UNHCR in December 2015, the project was continued and UNHCR committed to gradually establishing 20,000 places in open accommodation, funded by the European Commission and primarily dedicated to applicants for international protection eligible for relocation. Following a revision of the agreement in July 2016, the scheme was also extended to other asylum applicants, mainly to Dublin family reunification candidates and applicants belonging to vulnerable groups. The target of 20,000 places was reached in December 2016 according to UNHCR<sup>143</sup>.</li> <li>• Each island has a number of facilities run by NGOs for the temporary accommodation of vulnerable groups, such as families, people with health conditions, and unaccompanied children</li> <li>• NGOs shelters for unaccompanied refugee and migrant children in mainland.</li> <li>• METAdrasi</li> <li>• Arsis</li> <li>• Praksis</li> <li>• Hliaktida</li> <li>• Solidarity now</li> <li>• Save the Children</li> <li>• Red Cross</li> </ul>

<sup>143</sup> Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/reception-conditions/housing/types-accommodation>.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network for Children's rights</li> <li>• Faros for unaccompanied children</li> <li>• Caritas</li> <li>• Elix</li> <li>• MdM</li> <li>• MsF</li> <li>• Organization Earth</li> <li>• Apostoli</li> <li>• Translators without borders</li> <li>• Movement on the Ground</li> <li>• Refugee Boat Foundation</li> </ul>
<b>Wider reception services</b> (social services, health services), <b>rights afforded to applicants</b>	<p>NGOs provide supportive - complementary to the work of the competent services activities related to the provision of raw materials, medical care, information, interpretation and legal coverage<sup>144</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unicef (education)</li> <li>• METAdrasi</li> <li>• Arsis</li> <li>• Praksis</li> <li>• Hliaktida</li> <li>• Solidarity now</li> <li>• Save the Children</li> <li>• Red Cross/Crescent</li> <li>• Network for Children's rights</li> <li>• Faros for unaccompanied children</li> <li>• Caritas</li> <li>• Elix</li> <li>• MdM</li> <li>• MsF</li> <li>• Organization Earth</li> <li>• Apostoli</li> <li>• Translators without borders</li> <li>• Movement on the Ground</li> <li>• Refugee Boat Foundation</li> <li>• International Rescue Committee</li> <li>• Danish Refugee Council</li> <li>• Norwegian Refugee Council</li> <li>• Oxfam</li> <li>• The Smile of the Child</li> </ul>
<b>Registration process of the asylum seeker</b>	
<b>Asylum procedure</b> (at first and second instance)	<p>EASO has supported the asylum procedure with the disposal of experts from EU Member States; in particular, international protection case investigators who interview applicants and give their opinion on the first-instance decision on the merits or on inadmissibility but do not have the right to make an international decision protection and the provision of interpreters to the Asylum Service.</p> <p>Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR</li> <li>• METAdrasi (cultural mediators and legal aid)<sup>145</sup></li> <li>• Greek Council for Refugee (legal aid)</li> <li>• Arsis (legal aid)</li> <li>• Network for children's rights (legal aid)</li> <li>• SOS Children's villages (legal aid)</li> <li>• Ecumenical Programme for Refugees (legal aid)</li> <li>• Praksis (legal aid)</li> <li>• European Lawyers (legal aid – Lesbos)</li> </ul>

<sup>144</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>145</sup> Cooperation with Asylum Service through a contract funded by Asylum Service via the funds of AMIF and EEA GRANTS.

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<b>Asylum procedure</b> (at first and second instance)	Subsidiary
<b>Infrastructure, personnel and competencies of the responsible authorities</b>	Subsidiary
<b>Law enforcement</b>	EUROPOL
<b>Immediate integration measures for asylum applicants</b>	NGOs that have carried out educational activities <sup>146</sup> (such as METAdrasi)
<i>Please add rows where necessary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frontex</li> <li>• EASO</li> <li>• METAdrasi (cultural mediators)</li> <li>• Médecins du Monde and Medin (medical screening) and identification of vulnerable people)</li> </ul>

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<sup>146</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.



**Q12. In view of the impact of the fluctuations of the influx on local authorities, how and to what extent were local authorities impacted by measures taken by the national government/authorities responsible? To what extent local authorities were able to influence this process?**

*While it is beyond the scope of the study to be able to describe and analyse impacts on all different local authorities concerned, please elaborate on how national measures taken generally impacted on regional or local authorities.*

Area	Impact on local authorities	Influence on the process
<b>Border control</b> (please specify if it refers to external border control, temporary control at internal borders and/or police controls in border areas)	Municipalities, Regions and Local Communities	
<b>Reception centres / accommodation arrangements and other housing</b>		
<b>Wider reception services</b> (social services, health services), <b>rights afforded to applicants</b>	Hospital care, housing services, etc <sup>147</sup>	
<b>Registration process of the asylum seeker</b>		
<b>Asylum procedure</b> (at first and second instance)		
<b>Infrastructure, personnel and competencies of the responsible authorities</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welfare Programmes of the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED in Greek).</li> <li>Recruitment of fixed-term employees to the relevant Services<sup>148</sup>.</li> </ul>
<b>Law enforcement</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining Public Order<sup>149</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Integration measures for asylum applicants</b>	Labour integration	
Please add rows where necessary	Municipalities, Regions and Local Communities	

<sup>147</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>148</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>149</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

## 2.2. Scaling down or dismantling measures following a decrease in numbers of asylum applications

**Q13. Many Member States experienced a decrease in the influx of asylum applications in the third and fourth quarters of 2016, while several Member States experienced a more irregular decrease at certain intervals after the period 2014-2016. If your (Member) State experienced a decrease in asylum applications, were any changes made to (the scope of) previously adapted or introduced measures?**

*This question seeks to understand if and how measures adopted during the previous increase were changed. Please elaborate on the process on how the assessment was made (by the government) to scale down the scope of measures.*

Greece faced an increase over the period under review, not a decrease<sup>150</sup>.

2014: 9.431 applications for asylum

2015: 13.195 applications for asylum

2016: 51.092 applications for asylum<sup>151</sup>.

**Q14. To what extent did the decrease result in adapting or abolishing/dismantling measures taken in periods of increase?**

Not applicable

**Q15. To what extent did the decrease lead to a shift in political and administrative prioritisation of measures taken ?**  
(e.g. from asylum procedure to integration and or return)?

Not applicable

**Q16. To what extent did the decrease lead to measures (and/or debate) about maintaining established admission, housing and integration capacities as well as preserving gained expertise (e.g. regularly training of former staff; maintaining infrastructure; increasing capacities within other admission procedures such as resettlement, relocation, humanitarian admission)?**

Not applicable

<sup>150</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>151</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Greek\\_Asylum\\_Service\\_Statistical\\_Data\\_GR.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Greek_Asylum_Service_Statistical_Data_GR.pdf).

### Section 3: Effectiveness of the measures taken

This phase concerns the period after the implementation of new practices and ad-hoc measures and their follow-up. Only Member State who implemented national measures in response to a fluctuation of the influx are required to reply. Please copy the entire table below for all the measures listed in Q10.

#### Q17a. Please indicate the impacts and effectiveness of each measure mentioned above.

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Immediate impact</b> (in the first days or weeks after its implementation)	Mobile Units and hotspots <sup>152</sup>
	<b>Medium or longer term effect</b> (a month or longer after its implementation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A process of pre-registration of asylum applications completed in the summer of 2016 has contributed significantly to the management of numerous incoming flows.</li> <li>• Relocation programme in need of international protection</li> <li>• -Implementation of the “Dublin III Regulation”<sup>153</sup></li> </ul>
	<b>Collateral or side effect(s) and unexpected/unforeseen effects</b> (effects not initially considered when the measure was implemented)	Overloading of the Reception facilities and Hospitality Centers
	<b>Was the measure evaluated for effectiveness? If so, by whom?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LIBE Committee’s assessment of activities for reception and asylum reception for third-country nationals as indicative<sup>154</sup>:</li> <li>• Providing accommodation to vulnerable applicants</li> <li>• Adequate human resources of the relevant Services</li> <li>• Access for asylum seekers to a legal remedy against a negative decision on their request</li> <li>• Protecting vulnerable groups etc.<sup>155</sup>.</li> </ul>
	<b>What was the outcome of the evaluation?</b>	Significant efforts have been made and substantial progress has been recorded in Greece’s reception and asylum procedures, but the country should continue to make efforts to ensure effective management of the incoming flows of third-country nationals entering the territory <sup>156</sup> .

#### Q17b. Did the changing influx of asylum applicants prompt changes in national approaches for other types of migration, e.g. economic migration or family reunification?

The question seeks to establish whether the increased number of asylum applications brought about changes in other policy areas, such as for example a stricter approach to family reunification, or reduced labour immigration quotas.

Not applicable.
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<sup>152</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>155</sup> Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014\\_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2017/01-12/COM\\_C\(2016\)8525\\_EL.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2017/01-12/COM_C(2016)8525_EL.pdf)

<sup>156</sup> Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014\\_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2017/01-12/COM\\_C\(2016\)8525\\_EL.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2017/01-12/COM_C(2016)8525_EL.pdf)

**Section 4: Financing of the implemented measures, other resources, and administrative burden**

**Q18a. How were the implemented national measures financed? (i.e. on the basis of an emergency budget passed in parliament, additional budget allocation by the responsible ministry/authority, budgetary contributions from multiple authorities, a budgetary contribution key)**

The implemented national measures are financed by European and National Funds<sup>157</sup>. Excluding the Services of Reception, Identification and Asylum, the services of the Regions, the services of the Municipalities, the Hellenic Coast Guard<sup>158</sup>, the Hellenic Police, the hospitals, the competent central government departments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)<sup>159</sup>, civil society organizations<sup>160</sup>, institutions, bodies, and voluntary organizations, are involved in the management of the large volume of refugee flows in Greece. The work of the aforementioned institutions includes actions and services with very high administrative and organizational requirements not only due to enormous intensity of the workload compared to local societies and infrastructures, but also due to high financial costs<sup>161</sup>. Costs are increasing for building new reception<sup>162</sup> and detention infrastructures, for basic hosting amenities<sup>163</sup> and subsistence (food, water supply, etc.), for infrastructure maintenance, for the high operating costs of all the aforementioned activities<sup>164</sup>, expenditures on healthcare and hospitalization of incoming populations, etc., while the state is in deep economic recession<sup>165</sup>. Expenditures were also foreseen for the Joint European Return actions (JROs), "which were responsible for surcharging the appropriations for financial aid from the European Return Fund of Greece and the European Return Fund of the organizing countries, except travel expenses for accompanying persons of the Greek mission covered by the state budget"<sup>166</sup>. The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex), is in charge of the management of these actions<sup>167</sup>.

**Q18b. Was the financing plan of ad-hoc measures different from the financing of already existing and structural measures for national asylum policies/national asylum system? How?**

*Please elaborate.*

Much of the funding of ad hoc measures has emerged in the form of emergency measures.

<sup>157</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20171114\\_managing\\_migration\\_eu\\_financial\\_support\\_to\\_greece\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20171114_managing_migration_eu_financial_support_to_greece_en.pdf)

<sup>158</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>159</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>160</sup> Available at: <http://www.gcr.gr/index.php/el/action/gcr-projects/2015/item/518-fighting-the-refugee-crisis-in-athens>

<sup>161</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>162</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>163</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>164</sup> European Commission (2015) *Final Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Progress Report on the Implementation of the Hotspots in Greece – 15.12.2015 Com(2015) 678*. Strasbourg: European Commission. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/securing-eu-borders/legal-documents/docs/communication\\_-\\_progress\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_implementation\\_of\\_the\\_hotspots\\_in\\_greece\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/securing-eu-borders/legal-documents/docs/communication_-_progress_report_on_the_implementation_of_the_hotspots_in_greece_en.pdf)

<sup>165</sup> The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in a report on the economic consequences of rising migratory flows in Europe, estimated that Greece's 2015 budgetary cost for refugee management reached 0.17% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (about three hundred (300) million). See: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2016/sdn1602.pdf>

<sup>166</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

<sup>167</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a\\_greece\\_apr\\_part2\\_english.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/annual-policy-12a_greece_apr_part2_english.pdf)

**Q19. Did the fluctuation of the influx bring an increase/decrease in the administrative burden for national authorities responsible of asylum applicants? If yes, how did your Member State deal with that?**

*Please consider as administrative burden the recruitment of additional personnel, additional trainings, changes in procedures, etc.*

The increasing influx of asylum seekers has added to the administrative burden for the competent national authorities for asylum seekers. Indicatively, the Reception and Identification Service, the Asylum Service, the Hellenic Coast Guard, the Hellenic Army, the Hellenic Police, the Regional Directorates of Education and the municipalities of Eastern Aegean islands have greatly increased their staff due to the above inflow and as a consequence of the effective management and service of the needs of the large number of asylum seekers who entered the country in the years 2014-2016.

**Q20. To what extent did the adoption of additional measures directly result in an increase in staff/human resources at national (ministry, national services) or local level?**

*You can report on one or two case studies if differences are significant among large numbers of local municipalities.*

At Ministerial level (formerly Ministry of Public Order and Citizens Protection, later Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction and now Ministry for Migration Policy) the additional measures to deal with the crisis were the imposition of recruitment and filling of staff posts, mainly for contractual staff with open-ended contracts, and also were given via the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP in Greek) and through secondments and transfers of staff<sup>168</sup>. In addition, for the support of the staff of the various Municipalities in the country, welfare programmes were implemented via the Manpower Employment Organization in Greece (OAED in Greek)<sup>169</sup>.

<sup>168</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>169</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

**Section 5: The way forward - future preparedness**

This Section is relevant for all Member States and Norway, including those countries which did not experience significant fluctuations in the number of asylum applications.

**Q21. Following the fluctuations between 2014 and 2016, did your Member State put in place any new structural (emergency planning) mechanisms to adapt to the (possible) changing influx of asylum applicants in the future?**

Yes/No

Please substantiate your answer below.

- Structural Reform Support Service of European Commission (SRSS): The SRSS provides hands-on migration management support to Greece, in close collaboration with the relevant Commission services and EU agencies. The Head of the SRSS is the EU Coordinator for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement on migration management.
- Border Security Teams
- Frontex
- NATO
- Coast Guard
- EURODAC
- Design of the creation of additional closed pre-occupation detention centers in the Eastern Aegean islands
- Capacity extension planning of existing Reception and Identification Centers
- Reinforcing the staff of the Asylum Service and the Reception and Identification Service

**Q22a. Please elaborate to what extent the experience over 2014-2016 helped the government (national, regional, local level) to be prepared for any future changing influx in asylum applications, such as for 2017?**

*Please elaborate.*

The experience of 2014-2016 has significantly contributed to the preparedness of the government for any changes in asylum applications at local, regional and national level. First of all, an autonomous Ministry for Migration Policy was established, as well as a General Secretariat for Migration Policy and a General Secretariat for Reception. Both the Reception and Identification Service and the Asylum Service have significantly strengthened their staff, logistics and know-how. By Law 4375/2016, as amended by Law 4399/2016, the new Appeal Authority is established as an independent Service.

**Q22b. Have any potential future measures been planned? Are new measures under consideration?**

*Please elaborate.*

Decisions on future measures are taken at central (governmental) level<sup>170</sup>.

<sup>170</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.



## Section 6: Good practices and lessons learnt

Section 6.1 examines the existing challenges and obstacles for the design and implementation of specific policies to adapt to changing influx of asylum applications. EMN NCPs are kindly asked to justify their answers by identifying (a) for whom the issue identified constitutes a challenge, (b) specifying the sources of the information provided (e.g. existing studies/evaluations, information received from competent authorities or case law) and (c) why it is considered to be a challenge.

Section 6.2 aims to highlight any good practices of the (Member) States that have successfully implemented and managed fluctuations of influx of asylum applicants. This section can include also lessons learnt from the practical implementation of specific policies and measures. EMN NCPs are kindly asked to justify their answers by identifying (a) who considers it to be a good practice, (b) specify the sources of information provided and (c) why it is considered to be a good practice.

### 6.1. Challenges and obstacles for the design and implementation of specific policies to adapt to changing influx of asylum applicants

**Q23. What are the main challenges and/or obstacles that your Member State had to overcome in designing strategies, structural mechanisms and measures to adapt to the influx of asylum applicants?**

- The large number of arrivals of third-country nationals (the numbers are mentioned above).
- Large number of asylum applications (2nd highest in Europe in proportion of population)
- Interpretation requirements for asylum procedures
- Legal assistance requirements for asylum procedures
- Demand for decent and safe living conditions within the hosting structures in the mainland and the Eastern Aegean islands and reception and identification centers
- Existence of many informal structures for hosting immigrants and refugees with particularly problematic health and safety conditions (Edomeni, Piraeus port, Elliniko etc.)
- Requirements for a valid process of minority assessment
- Requirement to create an effective juvenile custody system
- Need to directly create and find suitable structures for accommodating unaccompanied minors
- Need for a large number of refugee and immigrant children to access formal education and to create pre-accession school classes
- Necessity to update the existing and create a holistic model of social inclusion
- Accelerating asylum, resettlement and family reunification
- The reluctance of EU Member States to implement the relocation plan

### 6.2. Good practices and lessons learnt

**Q24. Did or will your Member State undertake a national evaluation of the policies and measures implemented over 2014-2016?**

*If it already took place, please elaborate on the findings.*

The drafting of an evaluation of the policies and measures implemented in the 2014-2016 period can be given at the highest central/governmental level<sup>171</sup>.

However, the following results have to be reported as important - representative - conclusions of the policies and measures implemented during the period 2014-2016:

- Strident decline in fatalities and shipwrecks at the sea border with Turkey in 2016 compared to 2015.
- Effective recording of arrivals on the Greek islands in 2016 (more than 90% now, while in 2015 it was below 20%).
- Effective pre-registration and subsequent registration of asylum seekers in mainland Greece in 2016.

<sup>171</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

**Q25. Could you identify good practices in your Member State with regards to ensuring flexibility and adaptability of the national asylum system and associated services in order to deal with a changing influx of asylum applicants?**

*If yes, please elaborate.*

Regarding the operation of the Asylum Service, the pre-registration process has been a good example of good practice and flexibility by the public sector with the UNHCR and EASO<sup>172</sup>.

The Asylum Service participated in the 2017 EPSA competition. The aim of the European Public Prize for 2017 (EPSA Public Sector Award 2017) was to highlight and reward those actions that demonstrate an innovative approach to public service delivery and policy-making at a time when the Public Sector in Europe has become multidimensional, with increased obligations. The Asylum Service submitted an application to the EPSA Public Sector Award for the year 2017 (<http://www.epsa2017.eu>) describing how the mass pre-registration process was planned in the summer of 2016, why was it necessary, what innovative elements and who cooperated. Although the proposal was not nominated for the prize, the evaluators made some very positive comments<sup>173</sup>:

- “For the first time in recent years, such an extended exercise which involves Greek authorities, international and regional organizations and local NGOs have coordinated their efforts in order to achieve rapid access to the asylum procedure and refugee registration”.
- “The project participated in a crisis management solution. It responded to the operative and humanitarian imperative to deal with the high number of refugees at the Greek/FYROM border...”.
- “The project is highly relevant and meets core needs of the target groups. It deals with a problem facing many European countries. The project is organized in a good manner and it is outstanding”.
- “The applicant has provided a quantitative evaluation of the results that suggests a good performance of the project”.
- “The pre-registration exercise of asylum seekers has a high learning capacity. It provides a significant practical knowledge allowing for better preparing and managing of refugee crisis, while taking fully into account the humanitarian and human dignity aspects of the crisis”.
- “The project is clearly transferable to other levels and other sectors in Public Administration, when it goes to method. The same goes for transferability to other countries when it comes to solving the problem. It has a very high level of learning capacity”.
- “The project explicitly and implicitly addresses issues of social inclusion on a short term (pre-registration) as well as on a broader perspective (restoring trust and dignity)”.
- “The project has some evidence that social inclusion has been taken into consideration. It also indicates that these questions are a natural and integrated part of all PA”.
- “The project is a timely and praiseworthy initiative related to the refugee crisis management”<sup>174</sup>.

The Reception and Identification Service emphasizes the importance of cooperation, involving all stakeholders at the national and international level<sup>175</sup>. A variety of care options for unaccompanied children beyond residential care, which should be only a last resort, needs to be strongly supported, particularly the piloting of ‘supervised semi-independent living’ for unaccompanied adolescents aiming to provide more appropriate and sustainable care solutions.

<sup>172</sup> Interview with the Asylum Service held on 29/11/2017.

<sup>173</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/?p=5855>

<sup>174</sup> Available at: <http://asylo.gov.gr/?p=5855>

<sup>175</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

**Q26. What are the key lessons learnt by key national authorities involved over the period 2014-2016?**

*Please elaborate and add as many rows as needed.*

Lesson learnt	Responsible authority/stakeholder
1. Difficulties regarding the identification of vulnerable persons.	Reception and Identification Service, Ministry of Health
2. Difficulties regarding the adequate guardianship system for unaccompanied minors.	Prosecutors, Reception and Identification, Hellenic police
3. Difficulties regarding finding appropriate structures for hospitality of unaccompanied minors.	National Center for Social Solidarity (NCSS, EKKA in Greek), Ministry for Migration Policy, Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity
4. Difficulties regarding reliability of age verification.	Reception and Identification Service, Ministry of Health
5. Difficulties in living conditions and maintaining peaceful living within the Reception Centers and Identification.	Hellenic Police, Greek Army, Reception and Identification Service, Ministry for Migration Policy
6. No legal assistance in asylum procedures in the East Aegean islands.	Asylum Service, Ministry for Migration Policy, Ministry of Justice
7. Absence of system of foster families for protection and integration of unaccompanied minors.	Ministry for Migration Policy, Ministry of Justice
8. Difficulties regarding complete child integration for refugees and immigrants to official formalities of education, and corresponding creation of pre-accession school classes, especially in the eastern islands of the Aegean Sea.	Ministry for Migration Policy, Ministry of Education
9. The phenomenon can be tackled effectively, within the framework of solidarity and partnership, not only at national level but especially at European level <sup>176</sup> .	Common European Asylum System
10. A state based on its own powers, and not in a European context, as regards the sharing of responsibilities, cannot cope with dealing with numerous refugee flows.	
11. The response of Civil Society is of the utmost importance <sup>177</sup> .	

<sup>176</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

<sup>177</sup> Interview with the Reception and Identification Service held on 27/11/2017.

### Section 7: Conclusions

*The Synthesis Report will outline the key findings, main observations of the Study, present conclusions relevant for policymakers at national and EU level and identify policy pointers for future actions. Specific conclusions drawn by (Member) State should be included in the Top Line Factsheet to prevent duplication of efforts.*

**Note: not to be drafted by NCPs.**

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In recent years, Greece has received numerous flows of third-country nationals, both from the land of Evros and from its maritime borders (the Aegean coast with Turkey). According to official Frontex statistics, 50.830 illegal border crossings across the Eastern Mediterranean route have been recorded for 2014. In the following years, this figure was 885.386 illegal border crossings (2015) and 18.2534 (2016) respectively<sup>178</sup>. The demands of third-country nationals for asylum within the territory of Greece have more than doubled between 2014-2017 (9.431 requests in the year 2014, 13.188 requests in the year 2015, 51.061 requests in the year 2016 and 58.661 requests in the year 2017)<sup>179</sup>. This demonstrates the pressure on the state mechanism, the competent services and the Greek society, in the management of the aforementioned flows, in receiving, identifying, treating, and rendering the statutory status etc.

Significant points of the legislative changes, policies and measures recorded in this study, within the period considered (2014-2016), for the effective management of incoming third-country nationals in Greece, are indicatively the following:

- ✓ Law 4251/2014, "Immigration and Social Integration Code and other provisions"<sup>180</sup>.
- ✓ Law 4332/2015, "Amendment of the provisions of the Greek Nationality Code – Amendment of Law 4521/2014 to transpose to Greek law Directive 2011/98/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council "on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third country workers legally residing in a Member State" and Directive 2014/36/EU "on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers" and other provisions."<sup>181</sup>
- ✓ Law 4375/2016, "On the organization and operation of the Asylum Service, the Appeals Authority, the Reception and Identification Service, the establishment of the General Secretariat for Reception, the transposition into Greek legislation of the provisions of Directive 2013/32/EC "on common procedures for granting and withdrawing the status of international protection (recast) (L 180/29/06/2013), provisions on the employment of beneficiaries of international protection and other provisions"<sup>182</sup>.
- ✓ Pre-registration procedure for asylum applications
- ✓ The launch operation of hotspots on the Greek islands.
- ✓ The EU-Turkey Statement.
- ✓ The Relocation Programme of beneficiaries of international protection from the first host country to another Member-State.
- ✓ The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme in the country of origin of third-country nationals, with the help of IOM.
- ✓ The constant support of Greece by the European Asylum Support Office via successive projects of support that were signed from 2011 onwards.
- ✓ Presence of FRONTEX and NATO at the Borders.

The support of EASO to Greece, the strengthening of the Greek asylum system and the management of the increased flows of third-country nationals that entered the Greek territory is of great importance for the most efficient success of the work of "front-line" services, Reception and Identification and Asylum Service. Also, with ongoing staff training and meeting human resource needs through recruitment of fixed-term staff and with the help of civil society organizations, the First Reception Service and UNHCR continued their effort to cope with the large volume of work. As can be seen from the data gathered in the context of this study, considerable efforts and significant progress have been made in the reception and asylum procedures in Greece. On this basis, the country should continue to make efforts to ensure the most effective management of incoming flows of citizens of third countries and beneficiaries of international protection entering the Greek territory. The experience of 2014-2016 has significantly contributed to the preparation of the government for any changes and new demands on the incoming flows -through the Greek borders- and applications for asylum at local, regional and national level. Every effort must be made at the European level and the "first-line" countries (Greece-Italy) should receive the full support of all EU Member States.

<sup>178</sup> Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/eastern-mediterranean-route/>

<sup>179</sup> Available at: [http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Greek\\_Asylum\\_Service\\_Statistical\\_Data\\_GR.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Greek_Asylum_Service_Statistical_Data_GR.pdf)

<sup>180</sup> Available at: [http://www.karagilanis.gr/images/site/1010/11616\\_nomos\\_4251.pdf](http://www.karagilanis.gr/images/site/1010/11616_nomos_4251.pdf)

<sup>181</sup> Available at: <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/4332.pdf>

<sup>182</sup> Available at: <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/n-4375-2016.pdf>