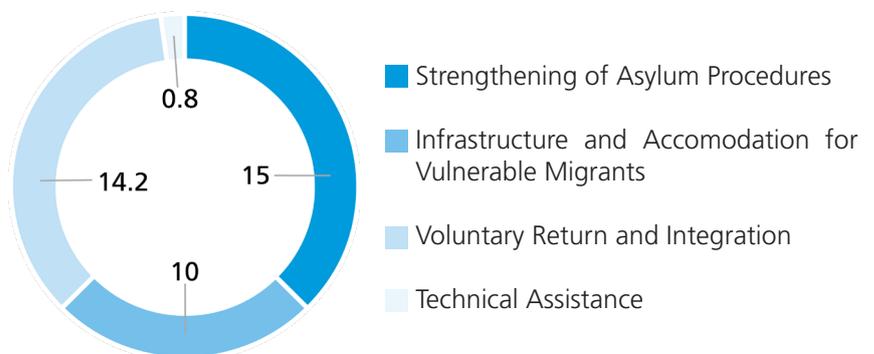


Second Swiss Contribution Swiss - Greek Cooperation Programme January 2024

Background:

The Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme is part of the Framework credit on migration of the Second Swiss Contribution to Europe, which serves as an investment in European security, stability, and prosperity. A framework agreement that amounts to CHF 40 million was signed with Greece in October 2022. The Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme supports projects to strengthen asylum procedures, infrastructure and accommodation for vulnerable migrants, integration, and voluntary return until 2026. It leverages Swiss expertise to provide targeted support based on Greece's needs within the field of migration.

Swiss - Greek Cooperation Programme in numbers (in Mio. CHF)



Milestones:

The visit of Federal Councillor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider in November 2023 to Greece underlined the importance of the Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme for strengthening migration management structures in Greece. During the launch event of the new “Athens Solidarity Center” project with the NGO Solidarity Now, Federal Councillor Baume-Schneider highlighted the crucial cooperation between the civil society and national as well as local governments to ensure a smooth integration of refugees.

In January 2024 the Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme reached another significant milestone with the successful completion of the „Emergency Accommodation Facilities Phase I” project. By supporting more than 1'100 unaccompanied migrant children in accommodating them adequately and covering their basic needs, the shared commitment of both countries to protect vulnerable migrants was highlighted. Following Switzerland’s pledge at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023 to further support unaccompanied migrant children in Greece, a new support measure agreement for the „Emergency Accommodation Facilities for Unaccompanied Migrant Children Phase II” project was signed by the Swiss State Secretary for Migration, Christine Schraner Burgener, and the Greek Minister of Migration and Asylum, Dimitris Kairidis. Furthermore, on the 22nd of January 2024 the two countries signed yet another support measure agreement. The “Safe Areas for Unaccompanied Migrant Children” project aims to provide safe accommodation and care to children arriving on the islands of Chios, Kos, Leros and Samos.

In order to further deepen the bilateral cooperation on migration issues, Greece and Switzerland organized an exchange of experts in Athens in September 2023. Representatives of the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration and several cantons were able to exchange with representatives of the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum on best practices and challenges in the accommodation of unaccompanied migrant children. Apart from fruitful discussions between the experts of both countries, the Swiss delegation visited different shelters for children in Athens as well as on the island of Samos.

Support Measures

Completed

Emergency Accommodation Facilities for Unaccompanied Migrant Children Phase I

Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection

Project Operator

International Organization for Migration, Greece
www.greece.iom.int

Project Duration

01.03.2023 - 15.01.2024

Budget

CHF 4.26 Mio.

Description

In five specialized Emergency Accommodation Facilities, newly arrived unaccompanied migrant children can be accommodated for approximately three weeks before being transferred to long-term shelters. Apart from covering the basic needs of beneficiaries, the accommodation facilities provide adequate protection services such as mental health support, legal assistance, caregiving and recreational activities.

Results

Total UMC supported: 1,139



Unaccompanied Migrant Children at the Emergency Accommodation Facility in Chalandri / © IOM

Under Implementation

Athens Solidarity Center

Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Asylum Services Directorate

Project Operator

Solidarity Now, Greece www.solidaritynow.org

Project Duration

01.08.2023 - 31.07.2026

Budget

CHF 2.37 Mio.

Description

The project aims to support asylum seekers and refugees with a holistic set of protection activities during their asylum procedure. Additionally, the project shall ensure successful integration by providing beneficiaries with services such as psychosocial support, access to social welfare and employability among others.

Emergency Accommodation Facilities for Unaccompanied Migrant Children Phase II

Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection

Project Operator

International Organization for Migration, Greece
www.greece.iom.int

Project Duration

16.01.2024 - 15.01.2025

Budget

CHF 4.102 CHF Mio.

Description

In Phase II, the project's objective is to operate four Emergency Accommodation Facilities dedicated to unaccompanied migrant children identified as homeless or living in precarious conditions in Greece. Serving as a crucial initial intervention, these facilities are designed to offer immediate assistance to children in need while ensuring their safe and timely transition to other care arrangements. Meanwhile, the accommodation facilities will provide adequate protection services such as mental health support, legal assistance, caregiving and recreational activities.

Safe Areas for Unaccompanied Migrant Children (Samos, Leros, Chios and Kos Islands)

Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection

Project Operator

Zeuxis, Greece www.zeuxis.org.gr

Project Duration

01.02.2024 - 31.01.2025

Budget

CHF 2.41 Mio.

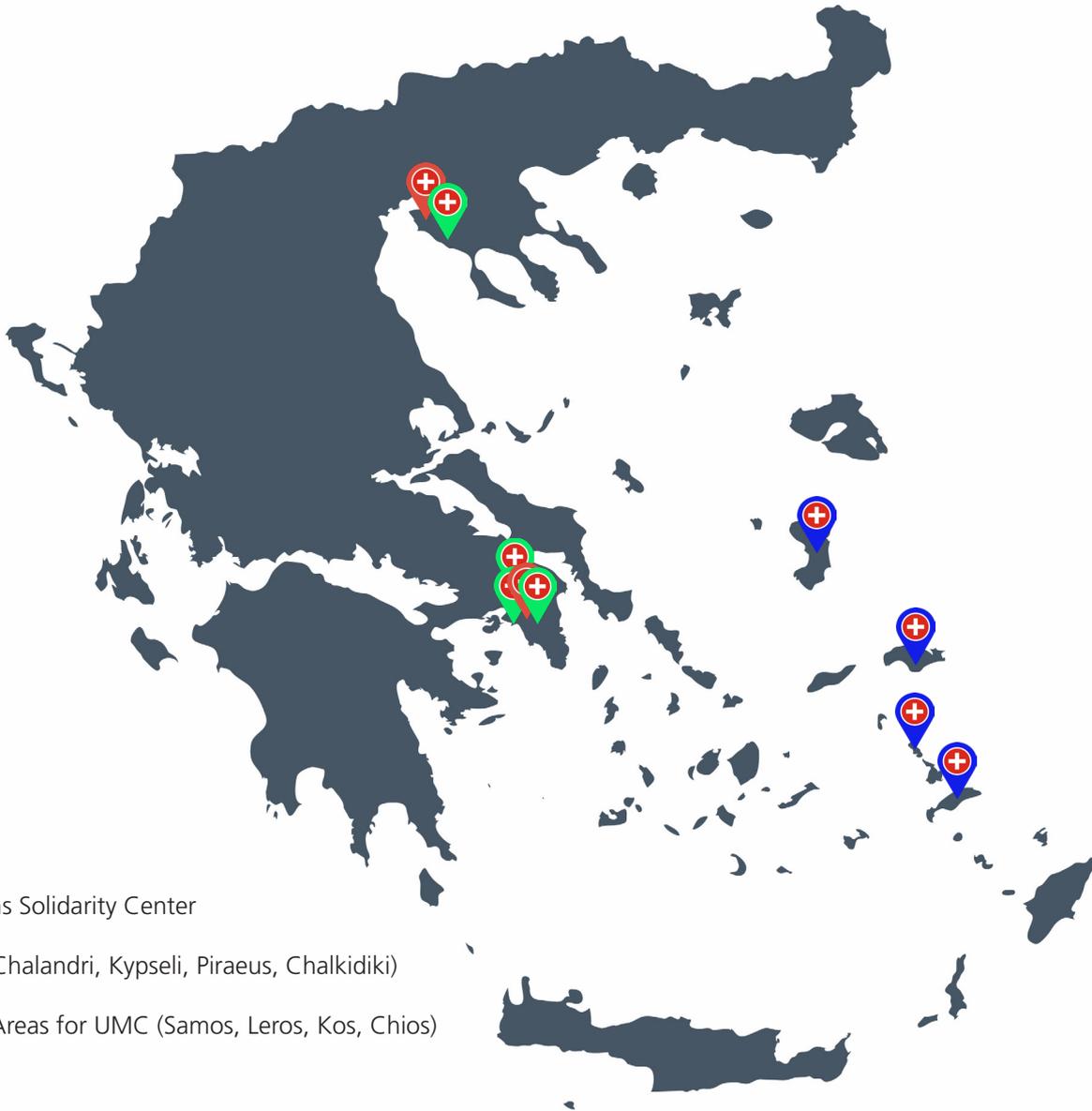
Description

The project aims to offer initial support and aid to unaccompanied migrant children arriving in Greece and residing in the Safe Areas of the Closed Controlled Access Centers (CCAC) on Samos, Chios, Leros, and Kos. Operating as a primary assistance initiative on these islands, the Safe Areas will facilitate the timely and secure referral of unaccompanied migrant children to appropriate care arrangements. This process is guided by an individualized and comprehensive assessment of each child's needs and best interests.



Minister of Migration and Asylum, Dimitrios Kairidis, and Ambassador Stefan Estermann signing the agreement for the "safe areas" project / © Swiss Embassy Athens

Interventions under the Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme



- Athens Solidarity Center
- EAF (Chalandri, Kypseli, Piraeus, Chalkidiki)
- Safe Areas for UMC (Samos, Leros, Kos, Chios)



Embassy of Switzerland
Swiss Contribution Office
Iasiou 2
115 21 Athens
www.eda.admin.ch/athens
athens.sco@eda.admin.ch

SWISS – GREEK
Cooperation Programme

