



## Olympiacos and SSPUAM Welcomed Children from IOM Shelters

Olympiacos FC, the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors and IOM along with UNHCR GREECE, UNICEF Greece, EU Agency for Asylum - EUAA celebrated the launch of the youth football tournament! "The involvement and commitment of one of the most important club in Europe in migration is a very powerful message and a great opportunity for the children and the Greek society. Sport is one of the best tools to promote and strengthen values that are also at the basis of the Greek culture such as solidarity, respect, honesty and

integrity. We all need more similar activities taking place in Europe", said Gianluca Rocco, Chief of IOM Mission in Greece.

40 minors from IOM shelters along with other young athletes of the academy competed for the championship reflecting solidarity and social fellowship, unlocking their potential to become better athletes.

IOM Shelters operate in the context of the Sectoral Development Program (SDP) 2021-2025 of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

# IOM Greece Successfully Completes “Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability” Project

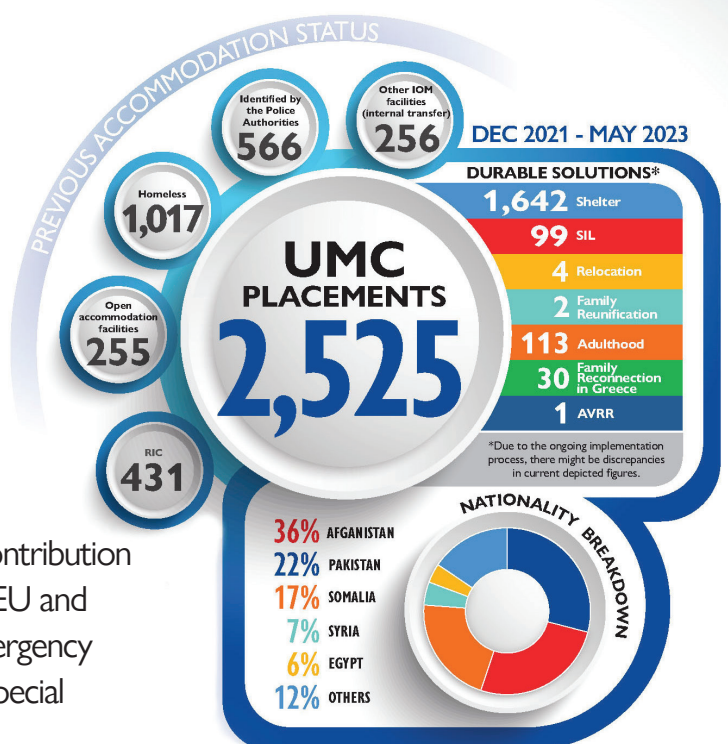
IOM Greece has successfully assisted the voluntary return of 229 vulnerable third-country nationals to their home countries with safety and dignity through the project “Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants in situations of vulnerability” which started in September 2023 and ended in June 2023. “IOM continues to assist migrants seeking to voluntarily return to their countries of origin in full respect of their human rights also contributing to their sustainable reintegration

- especially to those in vulnerable situations. EEA Grants have a key role in supporting this important activity contributing to the management of migration in Greece as well as to the well-being of stranded migrants” said Gianluca Rocco, Chief of the IOM Mission in Greece. The project was implemented under the programme “Asylum and Migration” (Addressing urgent needs for the reception and screening of asylum seekers and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups) of the EEA Grants by IOM.



## IOM Supported More than 2,500 Unaccompanied Children Hosted in Emergency Shelters

The project is currently supported by the Swiss contribution to reducing economic and social disparities in the EU and the Ministry of Migration & Asylum. The IOM emergency accommodation facilities are coordinated by the Special Secretary for the protection of UMC.



# IOM Greece in Europe Day 2023

The European Commission Vice-President, Mr. Margaritis Schinas awarded the refugee emergency response teams with certificates that verify the new skills acquired through the pioneering program of IOM and the Ministry of Migration & Asylum. The teams, trained in emergency situations and completed language and intercultural courses, celebrated the Europe Day 2023, and the official start of the European Year of Skills. The action is implemented in the framework of National Recovery and Resilience Greece 2.0 with the funding of the European Union – NextGenerationEU.



## IOM Greece Proudly Participated in CEB's Conference in Athens



IOM Mission in Greece joined forces with the Social Development bank in Europe (CEB) in 2015. Throughout the years to follow, a strong partnership was developed as a response to migration challenges raised in Greece. With the goal of creating a protective environment for unaccompanied children, IOM and CEB worked together on the Greek islands

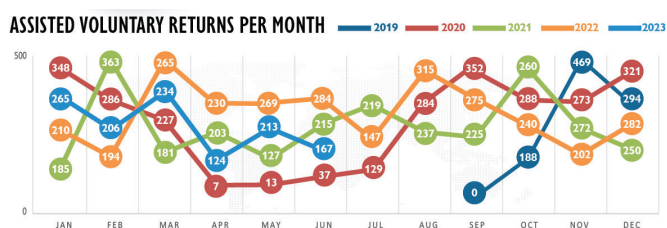
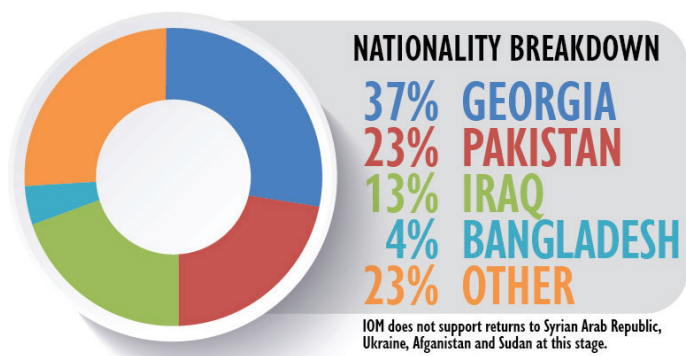
of Chios and Lesbos. Thanks to CEB's interventions children arriving alone in Greece, were supported with dignified shelter and received individualized assistance, through protection services and daily 24-hour staff presence. As a result of the comprehensive intervention more than 2,000 unaccompanied children got support.

# Voluntary Returns in a Glance

During the reporting period May / June 2023 - 380 migrants were assisted to return to their home countries. Meanwhile, the total number since the beginning of the project in September 2019, accounts to 10.375 voluntary returns. Amongst them, 37 % were from Georgia, following 23% from Pakistan, 13% from Iraq, 4% from Bangladesh and 23% from various other countries.

The project is co-funded by European Funds (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) and 25% by National Funds.

**10,375** migrants returned to their home countries from September 2019 to June 2023



## 2,775 IN-KIND REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES



## Art Exhibition “Travelling”

The YMCA Thessaloniki hosted the unique creations of 48 talented unaccompanied children. The children that are currently staying in IOM shelters in Thessaloniki were inspired by their own experiences, dreams, and expectations and managed to express their feelings through painting and photography. Representatives of SSPUAM visited the exhibition and had the opportunity to meet the young artists and learn more about their life and aspirations. The initiative is part of the Integration and Support Unit of Special Secretary for protection of UMC of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in collaboration with IOM, ARSIS - Association for the Social Support of Youth, Synparxis - Ecumenical Refugee Programme and the 5th workshop of the Department of Visual Arts & Applied Arts of the School of Fine Arts of AUTH. The exhibition is implemented with the support of the EU Agency for Asylum - EUAA and Athens News Agency. IOM Shelters operate in the context of the Sectoral Development Program (SDP) of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.



## Alla Writes her Own Story

Alla, a mother of 2, fled Ukraine when the war escalated. She is less than a year in Greece and with the support of the HELIOS project she has managed to establish her own real estate business and write her own success story! Even though she doesn't know when she will be able to return to her hometown and see her family and friends again, Alla is grateful to Greece for embracing her and giving her the opportunity to rebuild a new life. "As soon as I met HELIOS staff, I wanted to know everything about the Greek market, the gaps, and the needs. After the meetings we had and the research I did, I realized that there is a great interest for real estate in Greece, and under their guidance, I established my own company." HELIOS project is funded by the Ministry of Migration & Asylum.

## Honoring the World Refugee Day

The U.S. Ambassador George J. Tsunis met migrant children and enjoyed their pieces of art made of sugar paste. The Ambassador was also part of a food judging committee along with four entrepreneurs, who are closely collaborating with the HELIOS Project and have employed the project's beneficiaries. The group had the opportunity to discuss the importance and the challenges of integration of Beneficiaries of International and Temporary Protection in the local labour market. Moreover, the judges had the opportunity to taste the dishes of 40 children who competed in pastry, under the guidelines of the executive chef of La Chef Levi. IOM Greece participated in the initiative under the HELIOS Project, funded by the Ministry of Migration & Asylum.

