

ZERVOU REFUGEE CAMP IN SAMOS, GREECE

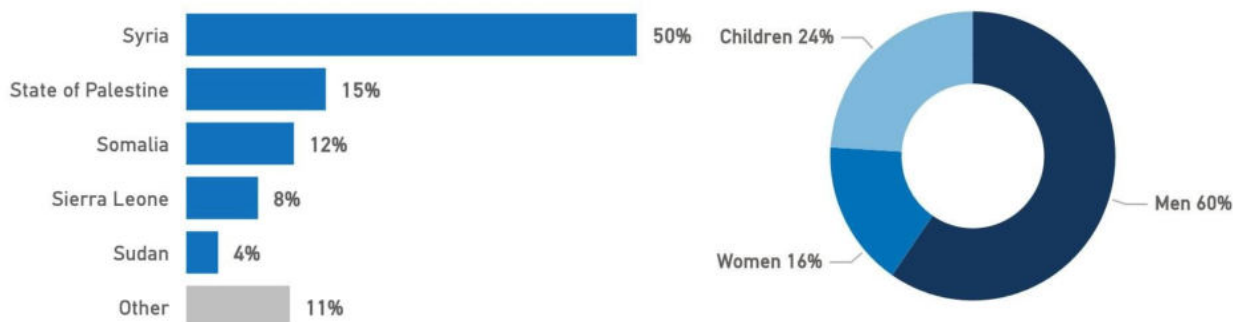
October – December 2023



Capacity of the Closed Controlled Access Centre (CCAC):

According to the Ministry of citizen protection (N.C.C.B.C.I.A.) the capacity of the camp in Samos is 3.650 and the occupancy until the 21st of December was 3.537¹.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the current population at the CCAC for the period November 27 to December 3 was 3.538 (50% Syrians, 15% Palestinians, the 12% Somalis, 8% Sierra Leoneans, 4% Sudanese, 11% other).



from UNHCR

This number exceeds the capacity of the CCAC by 178% according to UNHCR (the maximum capacity of the camp is not displayed by UNHCR). The number of new arrivals for the same period reached 104, with an estimated average of 15 new arrivals per day for the week.

¹ Capacity From Hellenic ministry of Migration and Asylum:
<https://www.scribd.com/document/694234044/NSP-Eastern-Aegean-21-12-23>

Living conditions:

The living conditions in the camp can be characterized as inhuman and degrading, as the number of asylum seekers accommodated exceeds by far the real number of people the camp can accommodate. During our appointments, many clients reported that the quality of food is poor and the portions are small. They only have access to running water 3 hours a day and don't have access to cleaning or hygiene supplies. There is an outbreak of scabies and bed bugs among others but there is only one doctor and one psychologist in the camp. On top of that, due to the limited capacity, many people are forced to sleep in any container available, including the kitchen. At the same time, in early December, one of our clients reported that he and other 15 men were forced to sleep outside because the police had forcibly kicked them out of their container.

Geographical restriction: Due to overcrowding, many people were given open cards and were transferred to the mainland. However, this is no longer the case as more and more people are receiving closed cards (geographical restriction on Samos).

Asylum procedures:

- Applicants from Yemen and Palestine receive prima facie status this period. All of our Palestinians clients receive refugee status without a personal interview while clients from Yemen have their interviews.
- Applicants from Afghanistan and Syria are most likely to receive the status if they pass the admissibility interview, and during the eligibility interview they are likely to be asked residency questions. For Syrians in particular, during the admissibility interview, the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) examines whether the third safe country criteria apply cumulatively and if one of them doesn't apply, they don't apply the concept. However, this wasn't the case until August, when they would reject cases even if some of the criteria weren't met.
- Applicants from Eritrea and Sudan get status without interview, unless during the examination of their cases the asylum service needs some clarifications about their nationality, exclusion reasons, tribe issues.

The GAS conducts around 40-50 interviews per week and the Samos handlers can also issue decisions.