

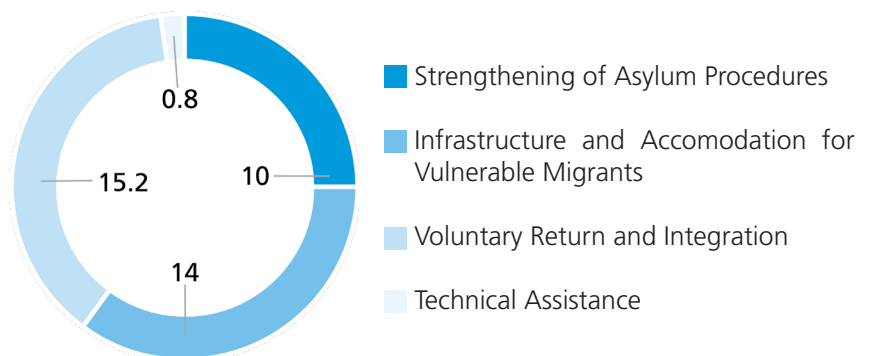


## Second Swiss Contribution Swiss - Greek Cooperation Programme May 2024

### Background:

The Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme is part 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 migration context.

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



## Highlights:

On February 14th, Swiss Ambassador Estermann hosted a Roundtable and Networking event at the Swiss Residence, organized by the Swiss Contribution Office in Athens. This event brought together key representatives from Civil Society Organizations involved in the migration sector, fostering critical discussions about the challenges and opportunities in this area. The meeting served as a valuable platform for sharing insights and understanding both current and future needs within the migration field.



Participants of the Roundtable and Networking event © Swiss Contribution Office

Between the 11th and 13th of March, a delegation from the State Secretariat for Migration led by Markus Peek, Head of Division for European Affairs, travelled to Greece to discuss the implementation of the Swiss-Greek cooperation programme with representatives of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss the implementation of the Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme and future cooperation. In the talks it was underlined, that contracts for more than 40% of the planned support measures have been successfully secured. During the trip, the delegation also travelled to Chios, where they visited the Closed Controlled Access Center for asylum seekers in Chios. Furthermore, the delegation visited the Safe Area for unaccompanied migrant children, funded by the Swiss-Greek Cooperation Programme and managed by Zeuxis NGO. This part of the visit assessed the effectiveness and impact of the Safe Area project, which provides necessary protection and support to the affected children.

## Support Measures

### Emergency Accommodation Facilities for Unaccompanied Migrant Children (Phase I & 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](http://www.greece.iom.int)

#### Phase I (completed)

##### Project Duration

01.03.2023 - 25.01.2024

##### Budget

CHF 4.26 Mio.

##### Description

Accommodation in five specialized Emergency Accommodation Facilities for newly arrived unaccompanied migrant children for about three weeks before transfer to long-term shelters. Includes basic needs, mental health support, legal assistance, caregiving, and recreational activities.

#### Phase II (ongoing)

##### Project Duration

16.01.2024 - 15.01.2025

##### Budget

CHF 4.102 Mio.

##### Description

Accommodation in five specialized Emergency Accommodation Facilities for newly arrived unaccompanied migrant children for about three weeks before transfer to long-term shelters. Includes basic needs, 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](http://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.

## Athens Solidarity Center

### Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Asylum Services Directorate

### Project Operator

Solidarity Now, Greece [www.solidaritynow.org](http://www.solidaritynow.org)

### Project Duration

01.08.2023 - 31.07.2026

### Budget

CHF 2.37 CHF 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.

## A Step Forward: Open Accommodation Centre for Vulnerable Women Asylum Seekers and their Children

### Partner Authority

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

### Project Operator

Médecins du Monde Greece [www.mdmgreece.gr](http://www.mdmgreece.gr)

### Project Duration

01.04.2024 - 31.03.2025

### Budget

CHF 0.5 Mio.

### Description

The proposed project aims to enhance the national reception mechanism for third-country nationals, particularly vulnerable cases such as women asylum seekers and newly arrived migrants with children. The intervention strategy involves housing provision, psychosocial empowerment, cooperation with MdM-Greece's network, and personalized support plans through activities like accommodation, basic needs provision, psychosocial support, legal assistance, empowerment, and health support. The project benefits asylum seekers, newly arrived women experiencing gender-based violence, and specific vulnerable cases granted international protection.

## Enhancing the Asylum Process for vulnerable asylum seekers in Greece

### Executing Agency:

Greek Asylum Service

### Project Duration

01.02.2024 - 31.01.2025

### Budget

CHF 3.8 Mio.

### Description

The Greek Asylum Service will establish two specialized asylum units in Athens and Thessaloniki, focusing on vulnerable asylum seekers. These units aim to address the increasing number of asylum seekers with vulnerability status. The support measure funds the operation of these units, enabling them to process asylum applications and issue end-of-process decisions. Additionally, the Reception and Identification Service, under the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, will finance the employment of temporary staff members to enhance the management capacity for vulnerable groups at an accommodation facility in Pyrgos, Peloponnisos.

## National Emergency Response Mechanism (NERM)

### Partner Authority

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

### Project Operator

ARSIS [www.arsis.gr](http://www.arsis.gr), Metadrasi [www.metadrasi.org](http://www.metadrasi.org), Network for Children's Rights [www.ddp.gr](http://www.ddp.gr)

### Project Duration

05.05.2024 - 04.04.2025

### Budget

CHF 2.34 CHF Mio.

### Description

The Support Measure in Greece aims to enhance infrastructure and improve conditions for unaccompanied migrant children (UMC), in line with national and international regulations. It focuses on strengthening child protection services through operations like maintaining Mobile Units and Information Desks, providing tele-interpretation for better communication, and ensuring safe transitions to long-term accommodations. This initiative supports direct engagement, effective case management, and aims to foster integration of UMC into their new environments.

## Bridging the Skills Gap

### Partner Authority

Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Directorate of Social Integration

### Project Operator

Odyssea [www.odyssea.com](http://www.odyssea.com)

### Project Duration

15.05.2024 - 14.05.2026

### Budget

CHF 2.7 Mio.

### Description

The project aims to support early integration measures in the labor market for refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers. This approach involves collaboration across state, industry, and social actors. The project focuses on providing education and training, facilitating connections between employers and job seekers, and transferring vocational training expertise from Switzerland to Greece. This multi-stakeholder approach not only addresses immediate integration challenges but also lays the groundwork for long-term societal and economic benefits, aiming to promote integration and social cohesion.



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



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