



Cash Transfer Program – Red Cross Movement – Greece **THE STORY – from 2016 to 2018**

The Red Cross cash program – Oct 2016 – April 2017

The Red Cross began to deliver cash to refugees and migrants in Greece in October 2016 with the first ‘cash’ distribution delivered in Ritsona camp. Based on that experience, the IFRC assembled a team to deliver cash assistance across Northern Greece, from December 2016. After initial struggles due to the highly complex political and operational context, the IFRC, PNSs, and HRC, who was also making use of its volunteers, were able to deliver a joint program in several sites across Northern Greece. The situation was turbulent with intense population movement, complex coordination through the Cash Working Group in Athens, and cumbersome duplication checks with between all cash actors across Greece, but despite this, the RC cash assistance program successfully reached a total of 5,475 beneficiaries who received at least one month of cash assistance.

The Greece Cash Alliance – May 2017 – Jan 2018

New requirements for cash assistance were promoted by the main donor, ECHO. ‘The four 1s’ meant having a single contract, a single Financial Service Provider, one database, and the same card. The cash actors in Greece agreed to continue to deliver cash under the coordination of UNHCR, but as part of an alliance, which became known as the Greece Cash Alliance. This new program was marked initially by a cumbersome transition due to the separation of roles it implied, namely that the cash actors were assuming a field implementation role, while UNHCR was registering beneficiaries in their database (ProGresV4) and issuing the cards which the actors were delivering themselves at field level. The RC expanded its caseload to an estimated 3,700 beneficiaries in 18 sites across North Greece and delivered the program gradually overcoming most of the operational challenges via good coordination with the UNCHR Field and Base offices. The next big task of the GCA was to streamline all the operational models of the GCA actors, namely IFRC, International Rescue Committee, Samaritan’s Purse, Catholic Relief Services, and Mercy Corps, into common SOPs and standards. By December 2017, the Red Cross had reached a total number of 8,700 beneficiaries; considering beneficiaries who received cash at least once between May and December 2017.

The ‘revised’ Greece Cash Alliance – Feb 2018 – end 2018

The second stage of the GCA, was marked by the ‘exit strategy’ of the cash assistance funded by ECHO to be transitioned to a structure provided by the Government of Greece, possibly like the newly established Social Solidarity Income system developed for impoverished Greek families. The work of the GCA done in the previous year resulted in a stable system of implementation with the aim of handing over to the Greek authorities beginning of 2019. At the same time, the number of partners in the GCA were reduced, leaving the IFRC, CRS, and Mercy Corps the only actors delivering cash nationwide under the coordination of UNHCR. At the beginning of 2018, the priorities of RC were the taking over of new areas and beneficiaries in northern Greece, thereby expanding the operation, and designing a way to increase the role of the Hellenic Red Cross in the programme, through its branches and volunteers. From February onwards, the IFRC had under its scope an estimated 10,600 beneficiaries in both camp sites and urban locations across all Northern Greece.

The ‘re-revised’ Greece Cash Alliance –Jan 2019 – 2020

By the end of November 2018, the total number of beneficiaries under the scope of the RC cash program had increased to over 18,000. The RC had fully assumed the roles of enrolment and distribution with only minimal UNCHR presence in the field, focusing on protection. Unfortunately, the plans for the handover to the Greek authorities in 2018 didn’t follow through and as such the IFRC decided to continue implementing the cash program as implementing partner for UNCHR in 2019. In 2018, the RC continued to increase its geographic scope and implemented streamlined ways of working started, for example by servicing the urban case load from the Red Cross’ Multifunctional centre (MFC) in Thessaloniki. Although largely unchanged in terms of the requirements of the program enforced by the context in Greece, the IFRC is currently in the planning and contractual stages for 2019 proposing changes which will ease the burden of frequent physical verification in the camps and advocating for further clarity and a sustainable application of the eligibility criteria for the beneficiaries of the program with a stronger vulnerability focus. It will also further collaborate with other RC services, particularly within the MFC to increase vulnerability assessment coverage, as well as prepare the beneficiaries for an integration process.



GREECE: CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME



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PUBLIC

- Region covered by IFRC cash transfer programme
- € CTP Operational Centre
- 🏠 Thessaloniki Multifunctional Centre

Total Caseload
10,600 beneficiaries

Sites
est. 5,000 beneficiaries

Urban Areas
est. 5,600 beneficiaries

Note: Population figures are based upon estimates as of 1 February 2018 and will be updated monthly according to agency lists compiled by the CTP team.



Produced by IFRC ROE Budapest. Sources: IFRC, Hellenic Red Cross, GAUL.

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.