

DEPORTATION & IMMIGRATION DETENTION STATISTICS IN GREECE: FIRST HALF 2025

SEPTEMBER 2025

Pressing need for legal aid

Deportation & immigration detention statistics in Greece: first half 2025

Pressing need for legal aid



Returns & deportations

11,402 Hellenic Police decisions: **4,962** return decisions (Return Directive) and **6,440** deportation decisions (derogation from the Directive). Main nationalities are Syria (2,029), Afghanistan (1,613), Egypt (1,239) and Albania (1,200).

2,658 returns of third-country nationals, of which 1,808 concern nationals of Albania and Georgia, not represented in arrivals via Evros and the Mediterranean



Review of return & deportation orders

172 decisions challenged through an administrative appeal to the Hellenic Police (1.5%)

6.4% approval rate in appeals before the Hellenic Police



Immigration detention

10,715 detention orders: **3,092** in return procedures (Return Directive), **6,438** in deportation procedures (derogation from the Directive) and **1,185** in the asylum process (Reception Conditions Directive)

18,441 RIS “freedom restriction” orders, including **5,399** in RIC Malakasa

99.9% detention rate in deportation procedures

62.3% detention rate in return procedures



Judicial review of detention

1,819 orders challenged through objections before administrative courts (17%)

50.2% approval rate in objections before administrative courts

0.6% rate of detention orders quashed in *ex officio* review by the same courts based on the same provisions



Detention conditions

1,437 people detained in pre-removal centres as of 30 June 2025, of whom **158** Amygdaleza and **128** in Corinth. Main countries include Pakistan (387 detainees) and Egypt (314 detainees)

212 people detained in police stations as of 30 June 2025

The present note analyses official data on return, deportation and immigration detention in Greece in the first half of 2025, supplied by the Greek authorities in reply to parliamentary questions.¹ The figures confirm yet again a continuation of the arbitrary and systematic use of deportation and detention against refugees and migrants, even for countries where returns are neither permitted nor feasible in practice e.g. Afghanistan or Sudan.

Registered arrivals in Greece

According to official statistics of the Greek authorities, a total of 25,799 people arrived in Greece throughout the first six months of the year. Of those, 15,131 arrived via Evros and the Eastern Mediterranean and 10,668 via the Central Mediterranean.

Greek law states that persons arriving or present in the country without documentation must be immediately referred to the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum for screening, prior to being channelled into asylum or return procedures.² The Hellenic Police explicitly concedes that “all – almost – foreigners entering our country make an asylum application during the reception and identification procedure”.³

Throughout the same period, the RIS registered a total of 20,049 people in screening procedures: 2,700 in Evros, 9,486 in the Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCAC) on the Eastern Aegean islands and 7,863 in Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) the mainland.

The main countries of origin of persons registered by the RIS in screening procedures were Afghanistan (6,003), Egypt (3,443) and Sudan (2,075). Over 50% of screenings concerned nationals of those three countries.

Return procedures

The Hellenic Police took a total of 11,402 decisions ordering removal from Greece during the first half of 2025. Of those, 4,962 were return decisions pursuant to L 3907/2011 transposing the Return Directive.⁴ This instrument was recently repealed and replaced by L 5226/2025.⁵ Another 6,440 were deportation decisions under L 3386/2005,⁶ in derogation from the Return Directive. This means that the majority of removal orders continue to be taken by the Hellenic Police in derogation from the Return Directive.

We reiterate that police authorities systematically flout EU law by indiscriminately issuing deportation orders against newly arrived people who seek asylum and are thereby entitled to remain in Greece.⁷ The figures show that the main countries of origin of persons subject to

¹ Hellenic Parliament, *Στοιχεία διοικητικής κράτησης και απελάσεων μεταναστών και αιτούντων άσυλο*, available [here](#).

² Article 38(1) Greek Asylum Code, L 4939/2022, Gov. Gazette A' 111/10.06.2022.

³ Hellenic Police Directorate, Reply to parliamentary question, 7017/4/27283-στ', 1 April 2025, available [here](#); 7017/4/26888-γ', 13 August 2024, available [here](#).

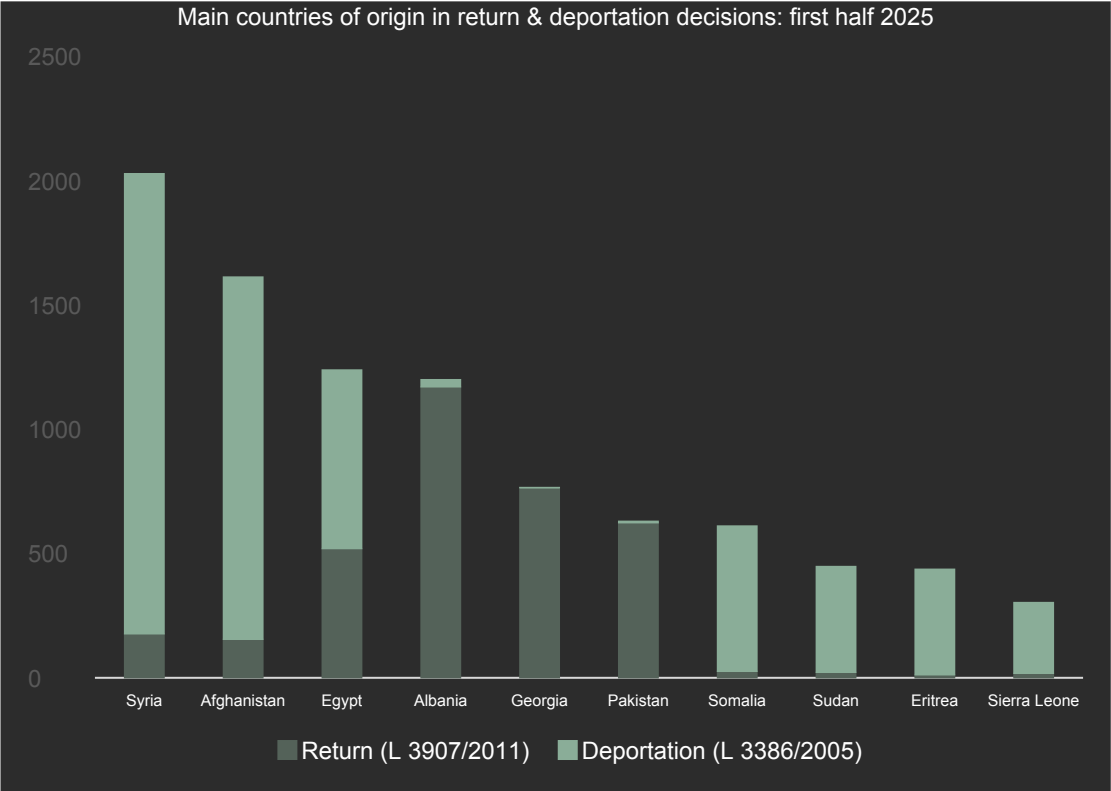
⁴ Gov. Gazette A' 7/26.01.2011.

⁵ Gov. Gazette A' 154/08.09.2025.

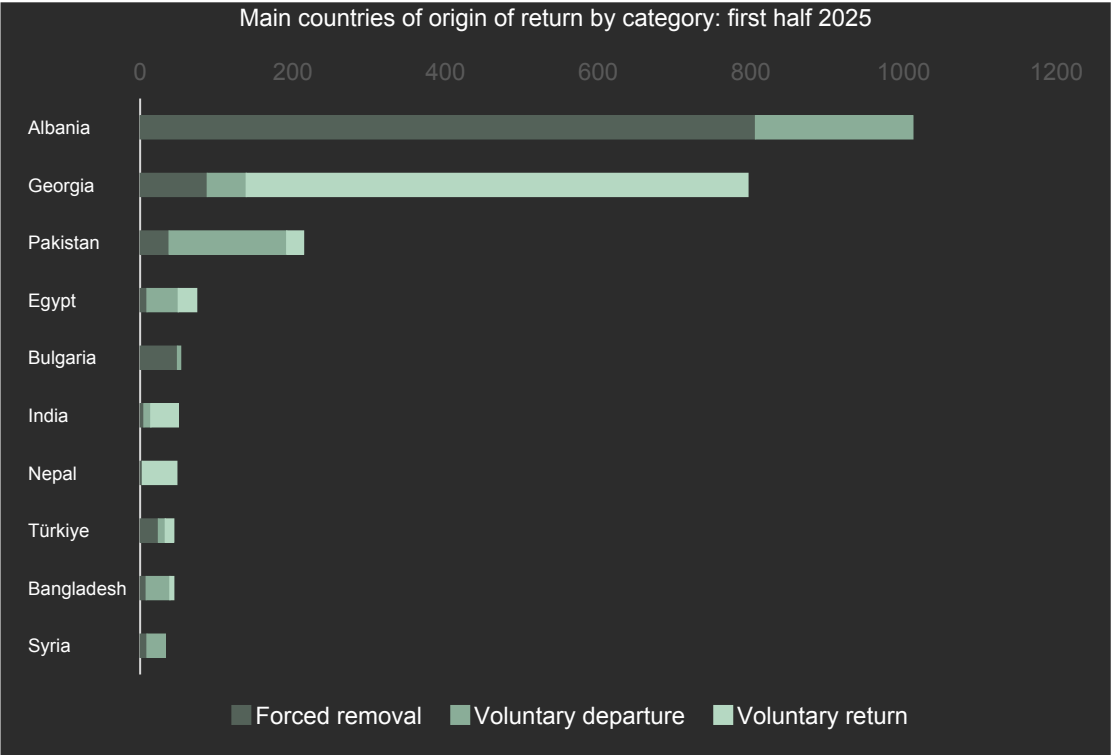
⁶ Gov. Gazette A' 212/23.08.2005.

⁷ RSA, *Νομοσχέδιο επιστροφών εκτός νομιμότητας και αποτελεσματικότητας*, July 2025, 5, available [here](#); *New Pact on Migration and Asylum: Impermissible regression of standards for asylum seekers*, July 2024, 21-22, available [here](#); *Persisting systematic detention of asylum seekers in Greece*, June 2022, available [here](#).

deportation orders in derogation from the Return Directive were by far Syria and Afghanistan, even though the vast majority of their nationals are recognised as refugees:



Throughout the first half of 2025, Greece carried out a total of 2,658 returns and deportations. These include 1,163 forced removals, 596 voluntary departures within a set deadline under a return decision, and 899 voluntary returns supported by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM):



Official data demonstrate that the overwhelming majority – over $\frac{2}{3}$ – of returns and deportations carried out in the first half of 2025 relate solely to nationals of Albania (1,012) and Georgia (796), not represented in arrivals from Evros and the Eastern and Central Mediterranean. Most returns were forced in the case of Albania, while most returns to Georgia were voluntary and implemented through IOM.

Administrative appeal against the return or deportation order

Deportation or return decisions issued by police authorities may be challenged by an administrative appeal before the Hellenic Police within a short deadline of five days.

Official data confirm that the remedy in question remains almost inaccessible.⁸ Only 172 out of a total of 11,402 decisions taken by the Hellenic Police in the first half of 2025 were appealed (1.5%)

By way of contrast on the accessibility of remedies, in the asylum process, where a return or deportation decision is taken upon rejection of an application for international protection,⁹ the Asylum Service issued 4,722 negative decisions on the merits and 3,247 inadmissibility decisions on asylum claims, while 9,019 appeals were lodged against Asylum Service decisions.¹⁰

The persisting, complete absence of free legal assistance from the state poses a constant barrier to the accessibility of the remedy for persons subject to deportation or return.¹¹ This is in breach of Greece's obligations and of systematic observations and recommendations by EU and national institutions.¹²

The administrative appeal before the Hellenic Police also remains an ineffective remedy for review of the legality of deportation and detention orders.¹³ Police authorities continue to generally dismiss administrative appeals by way of standardised decisions without assessing or responding to the submissions made by appellants.

These concerns continue to be reflected in official Hellenic Police statistics. During the first half of the year, 161 administrative appeals were dismissed and only 11 were granted, i.e. only 6.4% of the very few appeals lodged so far this year.

Resort to immigration detention

⁸ RSA, *Νομοσχέδιο επιστροφών εκτός νομιμότητας και αποτελεσματικότητας*, July 2025, 11-12.

⁹ Article 87(8) Greek Asylum Code.

¹⁰ Ministry of Migration and Asylum, *Statistics*, June 2025, 8-10.

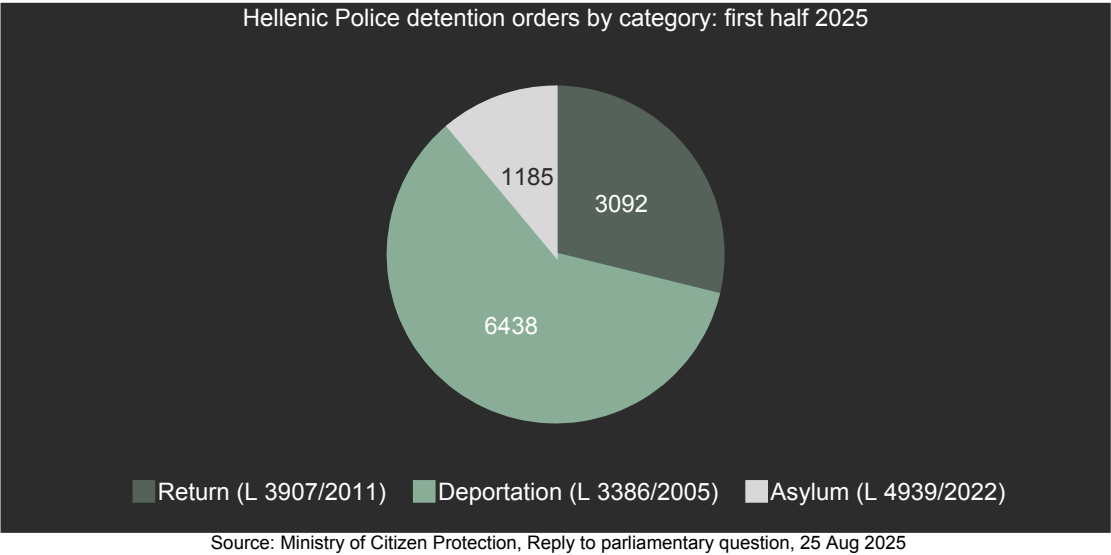
¹¹ Article 28(4) L 3907/2011.

¹² European Commission, *Report of the 2024 Revisit of Greece related to the serious deficiencies identified in 2021 in the field of return*, C(2025) 4342, 3 July 2025, Annex, 6, 8; Plenary of Greek Bar Associations, 'Μεταναστευτικό-Άσυλο: Η προσήλωση στη διεθνή και συνταγματική νομιμότητα αποτελεί μονόδρομο για κάθε ευνομούμενη δημοκρατική πολιτεία', 18 August 2025, available [here](#).

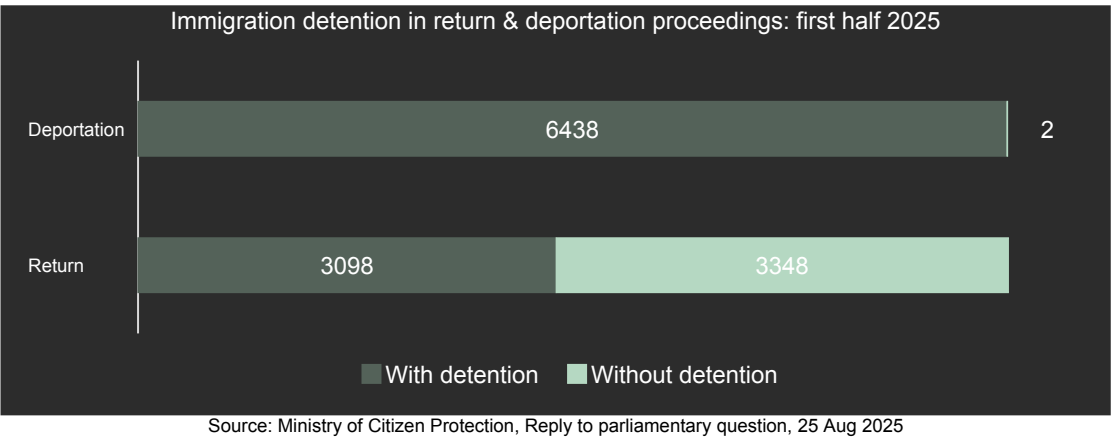
¹³ RSA, *Constant barriers to challenging immigration detention in Greece*, May 2025, available [here](#).

Administrative detention is ordered by the Hellenic Police. Detention orders by the Hellenic Police reached 10,715 in the first half of 2025.

Detention, however, may also take the form of a so-called “restriction on freedom” ordered systematically and automatically by the RIS in the course of screening procedures in RIC and CCAC.¹⁴ Throughout the same period, the RIS took 18,441 five-day freedom restriction orders and 8,487 extensions of such restriction. The majority of freedom restriction orders concern RIC Malakasa (5,399).



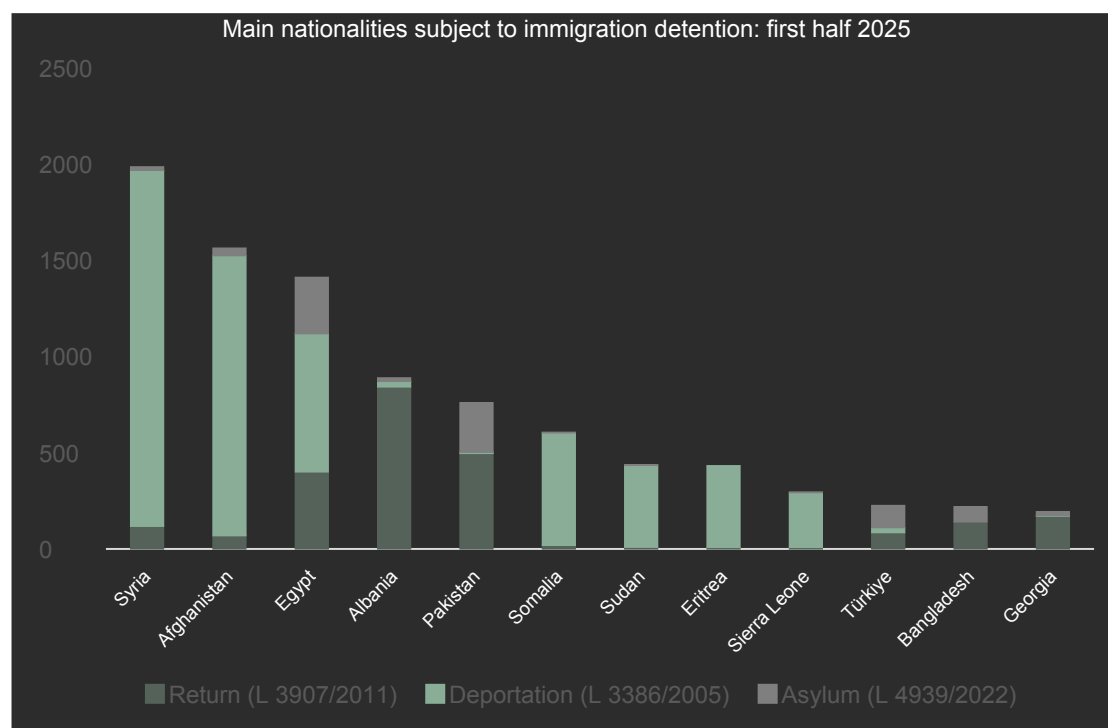
This year too, official statistics confirm that the Hellenic Police resorts to pre-removal detention systematically and not as a measure of last resort, in line with international, EU and domestic law. Detention is an almost automatic adjunct of deportation orders issued unlawfully under L 3386/2005 in derogation from Return Directive safeguards against refugees seeking and receiving international protection in Greece. 99.9% of deportation decisions were accompanied by detention, compared to 62.3% in return procedures under L 3907/2011:



Detention with no prospect of removal

¹⁴ Article 40(a) Greek Asylum Code.

The main countries of origin of people placed in immigration detention in the first half of 2025 were Syria (1,988), Afghanistan (1,565) and Egypt (1,413):



Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 25 Aug 2025

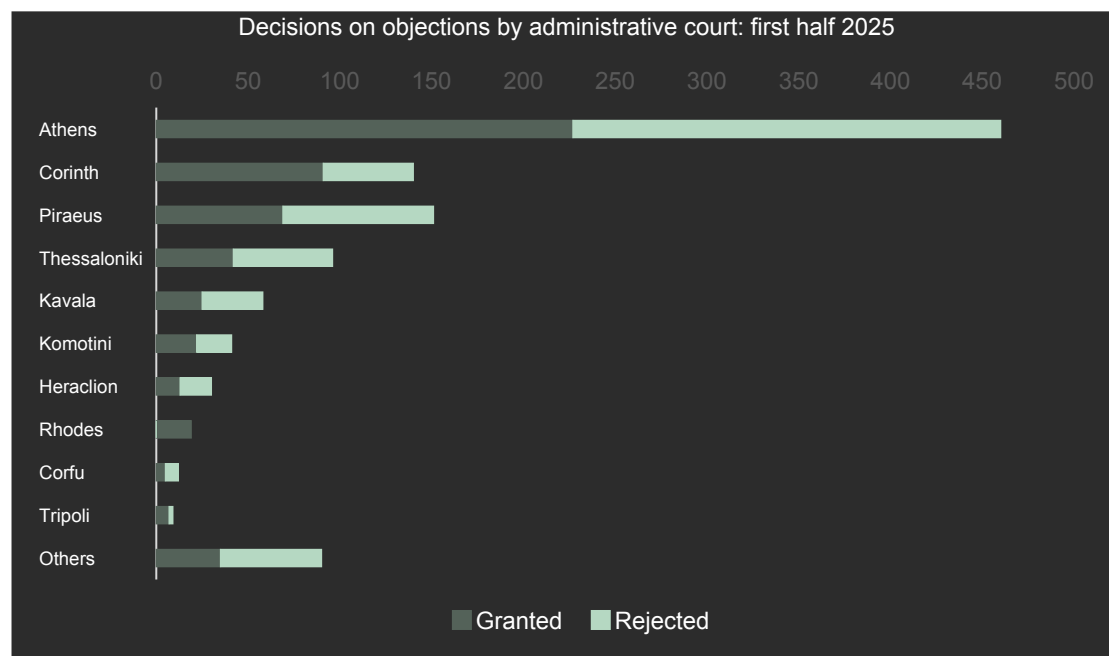
Pre-removal detention is conditioned upon the existence of a reasonable prospect of removal from Greece. However, pre-removal detention was imposed against people from Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Sudan or Eritrea without a prospect of removal to their country of origin or to Türkiye. We recall that the percentage of positive Asylum Service decisions remain extremely high and close to 100% for several of the above countries.

Judicial review of detention

1,819 objections against detention were lodged in the first half of 2025, corresponding to 17% of the total number of detention orders. Therefore, less than one out of five detention orders were challenged in court. The aforementioned obstacles to accessibility of the administrative appeal against return and deportation decisions, coupled with the complete absence of free legal assistance, adversely affect the effectiveness of access to the objections remedy as well.

The vast majority of objections against detention were lodged before the Administrative Court of Athens (1,123), far ahead of the Administrative Courts of Corinth (175), Piraeus (157) and Thessaloniki (96).

50.2% of objections against detention examined by the administrative courts on the merits in the first half of 2025 were granted:



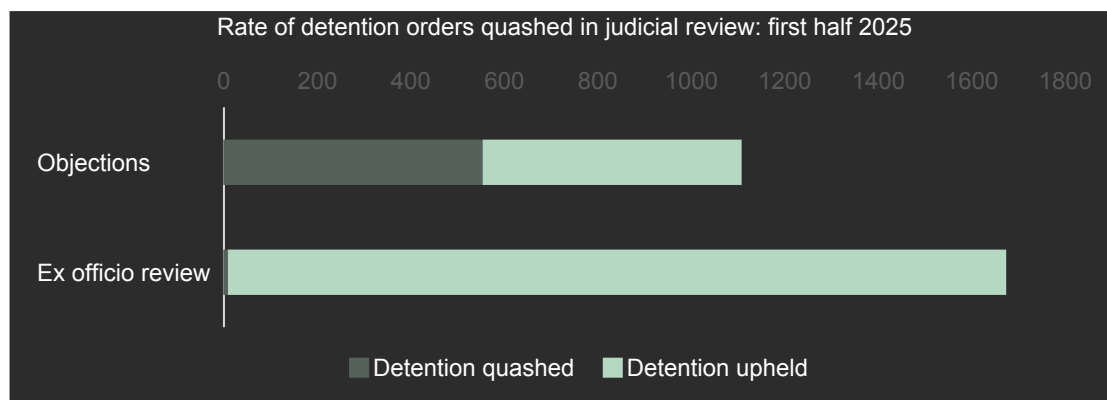
Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 19 Aug 2025

For yet another year, severe disparities persist between judicial review of detention in objections and *ex officio* judicial review of extensions of detention orders based on domestic asylum and return legislation, even though they relate to the very same provisions and are conducted by the same courts.

Ex officio review of legality of immigration detention: first half 2025					
	Asylum (L 4939/2022)		Return (L 3907/2011)		Quashed percentage
	Quashed	Upheld	Quashed	Upheld	
Corinth	1	437	0	0	0,22%
Kavala	0	300	0	126	0,00%
Komotini	0	110	0	137	0,00%
Athens	0	188	8	241	1,86%
Others	57	0	66	1	0,80%
Total	1	1,092	9	570	0,60%

Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 19 Aug 2025

These statistics demonstrate yet again the manifest discrepancies in the workings of existing mechanisms of judicial review of detention. The administrative courts quashed more than half of detention orders challenged before them through objections, yet found less than 1% of orders they reviewed *ex officio* to be unlawful. Importantly, in Kavala and Komotini, not a single detention order was quashed in the hundreds of cases examined *ex officio* by the administrative courts.

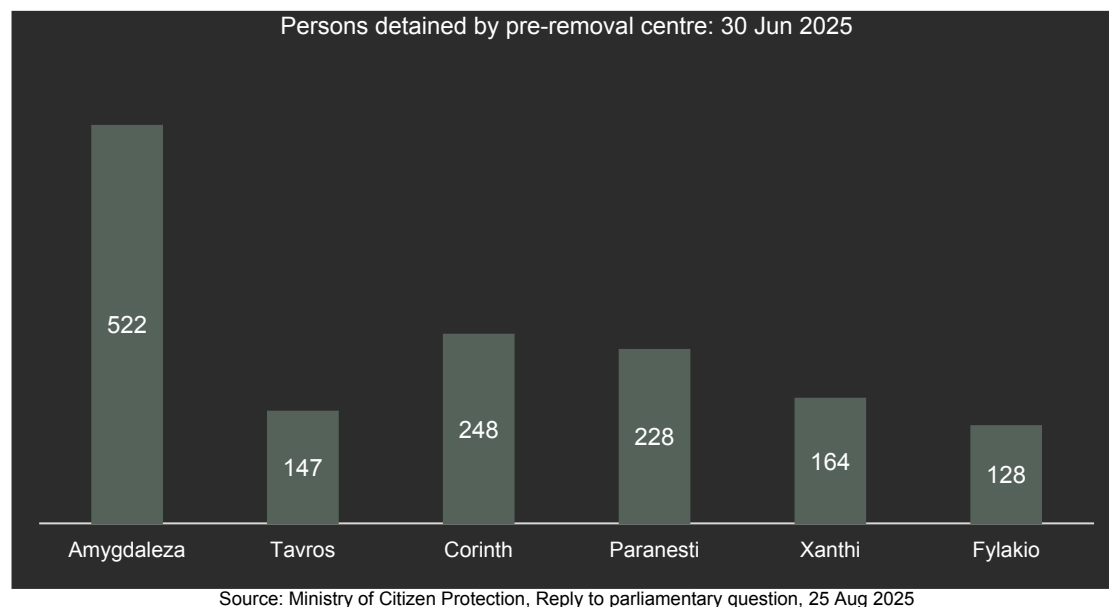


Source: Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 19 Aug 2025

We highlight yet again the pressing need for free legal assistance to people subject to immigration detention, given that *ex officio* judicial review of detention remains manifestly ineffective, as corroborated by official data.

Detention conditions

1,649 people were held in immigration detention at the end of June 2025, a slight increase on the end of the previous year (1,626). Of those, 1,437 were held in six pre-removal detention centres and 212 in police stations throughout Greece:



The main country of origin of people held at the end of the first semester of 2025 was Pakistan (387), whose nationals were mainly detained in Amygdaleza (158) and Corinth (128). The second main country was Egypt (314), whose nationals were mainly held in Amygdaleza (95) and Paranesti (89).

The top five countries of origin of people held in immigration detention at the end of the first half of 2025 include Afghanistan and Türkiye.

Data provided in reply to parliamentary questions refer to deployment of Health Units SA (Ανώνυμη Εταιρία Μονάδων Υγείας, AEMY) personnel in the pre-removal detention centres at the end of June 2025 as follows:

AEMY staff by pre-removal centre: 30 Jun 2025						
Profile	Amygdaleza	Tavros	Corinth	Paranesti	Xanthi	Fylakio
Doctors	1	1	1	1	1	1
Nurses	4	2	2	1	2	2
Psychologists	1	1	1	1	1	1
Social workers	2	1	1	1	1	1
Interpreters	4	2		1	1	1
Health visitors	2	1	1	1	1	
Administrative staff	1	1	1		1	
Total	15	9	7	6	8	6

Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Reply to parliamentary question, 25 Aug 2025

These figures point to constant gaps in health care for people in immigration detention and to a reduction in deployments of doctors and nurses compared to the end of 2024. According to the data, only one doctor was present per pre-removal detention centre, even for Amygdaleza where 522 people were held.



<https://rsaegean.org/en/detention-stats-greece-2025half/>



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