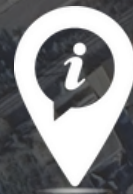




Border Violence  
Monitoring Network



MOBILE  
INFO TEAM

APRIL 2025

He used the baton only. I put my hand  
so he wouldn't hit my head. So then he  
It hurt me a lot. Alongside the physical  
problems, I have mental problems - I didn't do  
anything and he was hitting me  
very bad experience  
I would get beaten and experience violence  
One sandwich in one day.  
from the policemen there  
he got angry because I didn't know anything  
about the Greek language  
One bottle of water for one day  
If you have any problem, they  
I was in a cage all the  
blanket for us, not  
painkiller.  
When I asked for water, the  
police officers told me 'you  
a new one  
One day felt like one week because  
I can drink water from the  
prison  
Depon.  
toilets have nothing to play with or lose  
time with. One hour feels like three  
hours.  
The cold gets inside because  
here are no proper windows  
That is crazy

# No Beds, No Light, No Rights: New Findings on Greece's Illegal Use of Police Stations to Detain Migrants



# WHO WE ARE



**Mobile Info Team** is a Greece-based organisation supporting people disadvantaged by displacement or migration to navigate complex legal systems and assert their rights. We provide accessible information and tailored case support and use our daily interactions with people to advocate for change at national and EU levels, amplifying the voices of those affected by exclusionary policies and campaigning for a just migration and asylum system.



**Border Criminologies** is based at the University of Oxford, and collates diverse forms of research that aim to go beyond academics by showcasing original research from a range of perspectives, supporting advocacy work and creating practical resources to help those working in the migration field. Our work falls into five main areas: Detention and imprisonment, Deportation, Law and courts, Borders and policing, Activism and advocacy.



**Border Violence  
Monitoring Network**

**The Border Violence Monitoring Network** is a coalition of organisations that monitors and documents human rights violations against people on the move within European borders. Since 2016, it has published multiple editions of the Black Book of Pushbacks, a 3000-page record of testimonies of violations impacting more than 25,000 people on the move.

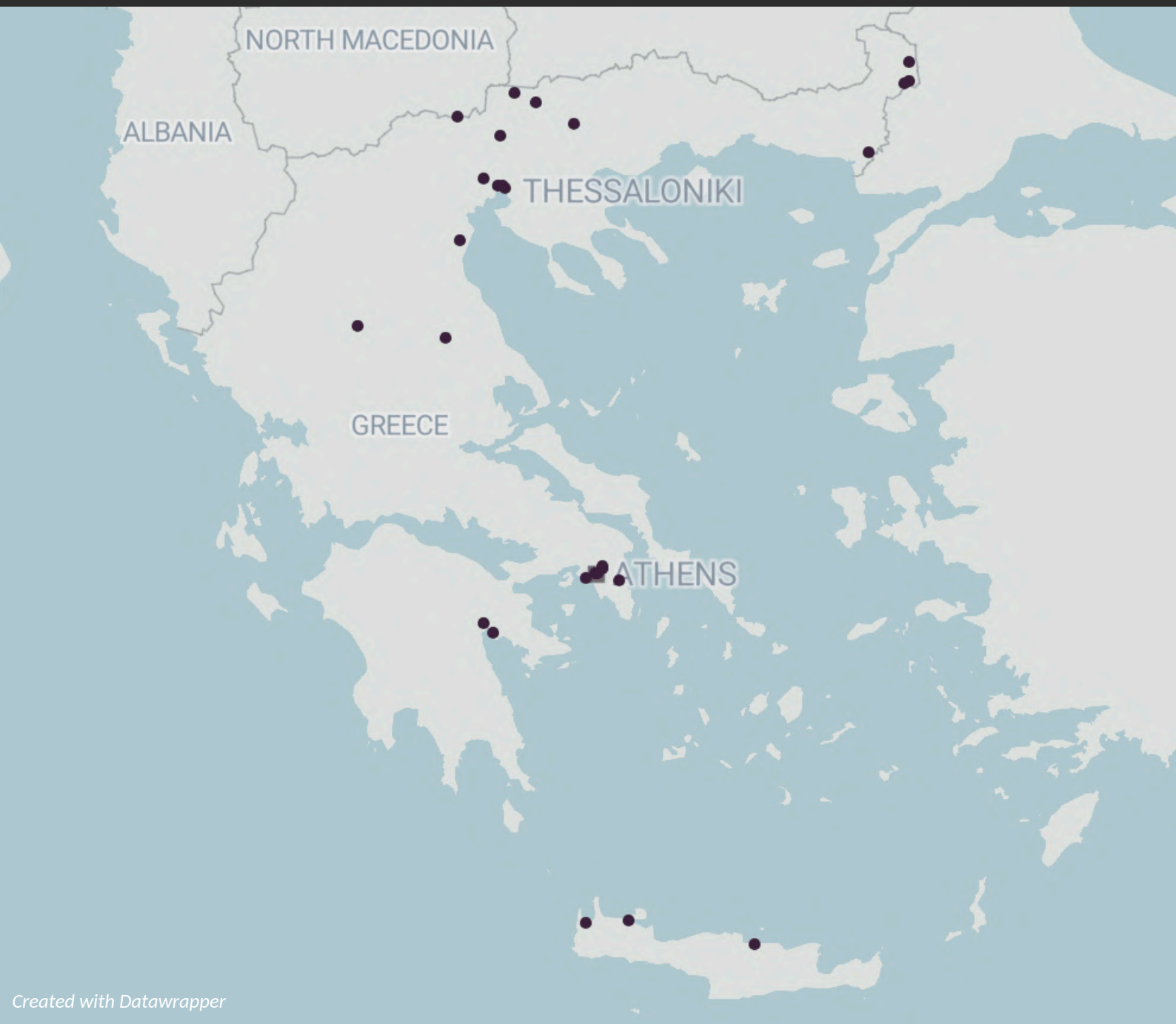
We are grateful to the 31 people who shared their experiences of being detained in police stations in Greece for this research, to the translators we worked with and to Hadrien Delacrausaz, Gaia Gamberale, Clara Zinecker and Claire August for their assistance with research.

April 2025

Research by: Alice Troy-Donovan, Andriani Fili, Lena Karamanidou, and Filippos Kourakis

Written by: Alice Troy-Donovan, Andriani Fili, Lena Karamanidou

## Map of 25 police departments where interview respondents were detained - 2020-2025:



Created with Datawrapper

# POLICE DEPARTMENTS WHERE INTERVIEWEES WERE DETAINED

Orestiada Police Directorate, Evros  
Didymoteicho Police Department, Evros  
Didymoteicho Border Guard Department,<sup>4</sup> Evros  
Feres Border Guard Department, Evros  
Serres Police Department, northern Greece  
Poroia Police Department, northern Greece  
Katerini Police Department, northern Greece  
Idomeni Police Department, northern Greece  
Kilkis Police Department, northern Greece  
Promachonas Border Guard Department,<sup>5</sup> northern Greece  
Special Holding Facility of the Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate within the Transfers (Metagogon) Facility, Thessaloniki  
Thessaloniki General Police Directorate, Thessaloniki  
Republic Square Police Department, Thessaloniki  
Neapoli-Sykies Police Department,<sup>6</sup> Thessaloniki  
Agios Athanasios Immigration Management Department, Thessaloniki area  
Kalambaka Police Department, central Greece  
Larissa Police Department, central Greece  
Agios Panteleimonas Police Department, Athens  
General Police Directorate of Attica (GADA), Athens  
Marousi Police Department, Athens  
Athens Airport holding facility  
Kaminia Police Department, Piraeus  
Kissamos Police Department, Crete  
Chania Police Department, Crete

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# ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY

BVMN	Border Violence Monitoring Network
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EMIDIPA	National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents
GCR	Greek Council for Refugees
GNCHR	Greek National Commission for Human Rights
HLHR	Hellenic League for Human Rights
MIT	Mobile Info Team
MoMA	Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum
PRDC	Pre-Removal Detention Centre
RIC	Reception and Identification Centre
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



# ◆ SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

This report presents new testimonial evidence on the widespread use of police facilities for immigration detention in Greece, highlighting the urgent need to end this frequently illegal practice.

Greek law makes it clear that police stations should only be used when absolutely necessary and must not serve as places for prolonged detention. This applies both to people in administrative detention and those in pre-trial detention. The Greek government made a commitment in 2009 to phase out the use of police stations and border guard departments for detaining irregular migrants, and has since made similar promises. Yet, as this report demonstrates, the use of police facilities for prolonged detention persists.

Drawing on 31 interviews with foreign nationals who were detained in Greek police departments<sup>1</sup> at some point between January 2020 and February 2025, we present the following findings:

- Interviewees reported that their **detention in police stations was frequently extended**, with respondents detained for an **average of 29 days** and in some cases for **up to 4 months**. This suggests the Greek state continues to rely on police facilities for prolonged detention of foreign nationals, including people awaiting transfer to a Pre-Removal Detention Centre and those in pre-trial detention, in violation of Greek law.
- People detained in police departments reported that they had **extremely limited or no access to mobile phones, lawyers or organisations** while detained. These factors make them particularly vulnerable to ill-treatment and violence from the authorities, which were also reported in testimonies.
- Conditions in police stations were reported to be **inhuman and degrading**, with police cells described as **dark, unhygienic and without built-in beds**. Respondents reported that they had **no access to outdoor spaces** and were provided with **just €5.87 a day** to buy food, basic items and to purchase phone cards. Access to healthcare services and legal support was reported to be extremely limited in police stations.
- Whilst the official number of people in administrative detention in police stations appears to be decreasing, there is a **lack of transparency** about the extent of this practice, and **no systematic monitoring** of the length of detention in police facilities and the conditions inside.



## Structure of report

Chapter 1 outlines the laws governing detention in police stations, including the grounds for detention and the conditions in which detainees must be held. In Chapter 2, we outline a brief history of the use of police stations for detaining foreign nationals in Greece up to the present day, alongside key issues related to lack of transparency, accountability and the prevalence of police ill-treatment and violence. Chapter 3 presents an analysis of survey data collected from lawyers representing detained people, and Chapter 4 presents findings from interviews with people with first-hand experience of detention. In Chapters 5-6, we analyse testimonies related to two police departments in Thessaloniki: the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate and the Special Holding Facility of the Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate. Based on the multiple troubling accounts of detention in these police departments, documented in this report, we encourage all relevant monitoring bodies to consider prioritising follow-up visits to these police stations in their future work. The lack of meaningful improvements since previous visits – including those by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) to the Special Holding Facility in 2016<sup>2</sup> and the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate in 2019<sup>3</sup> – underscores the need for continued oversight and scrutiny.





# KEY STATS FROM 31 INTERVIEWS

**30%** of all interviewees were detained in a police cell **for over 30 days**, surpassing the legal requirement for detention in police stations to be a short-term measure

**100%** of interviewees who were asked this question (28/28) reported that they **had no access to information on their rights in detention**

**100%** of interviewees who were asked this question (17/17) reported they **did not have access to their mobile phone while detained in a police department**

**88%** of interviewees who were asked this question (22/25) reported **experiencing some form of violence** while being transported to a police station or in the police facility itself

**3%** of all interviewees (1/31) reported that they managed to access **adequate medical support** while detained in a police department

**53%** of interviewees who were asked this question (9/17) reported that they **did not have access to adequate legal support** while detained in a police department

**15%** of interviewees who were asked this question (4/27), reported having access to **adequate translation services** while detained in a police department

**100%** of interviewees who were asked this question (22/22), reported **poor hygiene conditions in police cells**

**100%** of interviewees who were asked this question (23/23), reported that they were **not provided with basic items such as clothes, soap and warm blankets** while detained in a police station

# METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWS



## (A) Methodology

This report draws on 31 interviews with people who were detained in a police station in Greece at some point between January 2020 and February 2025.<sup>7</sup> Based on details provided in interviews and open source research, we were able to identify 25 police departments where respondents had been detained throughout the country<sup>8</sup> (see map on page 3 and list of police department names on page 4).

Interviews were conducted by field reporters working within the Border Violence Monitoring Network.<sup>9</sup> Interviews were mostly conducted over the phone, with the assistance of an interpreter and cultural mediator, and took the form of semi-structured conversations focused on the conditions in police detention facilities. Contact with respondents was established through the activities of field reporters working for the Border Violence Monitoring Network in northern Greece, including visits to community centres serving undocumented people and referrals from other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Years in which interviewees were detained			
2020	2	2023	3
2021	4	2024	6
2022	13	2025	3

The report also draws on interviews with practitioners and stakeholders, survey responses from lawyers working with detained people, and publicly available documents<sup>10</sup> related to the management of police station facilities. These documents are a valuable source of factual information about the physical infrastructure of police stations (e.g. the size and layout of cells) and the contractual arrangements that shape daily conditions (e.g. cleaning, catering and provision of medicines for detainees). Additionally, they offer insight into the role of private actors in sustaining the detention system. Crucially, we juxtapose official documents with testimony and field observations to expose the stark gap between what is contractually promised and the lived realities of detention.

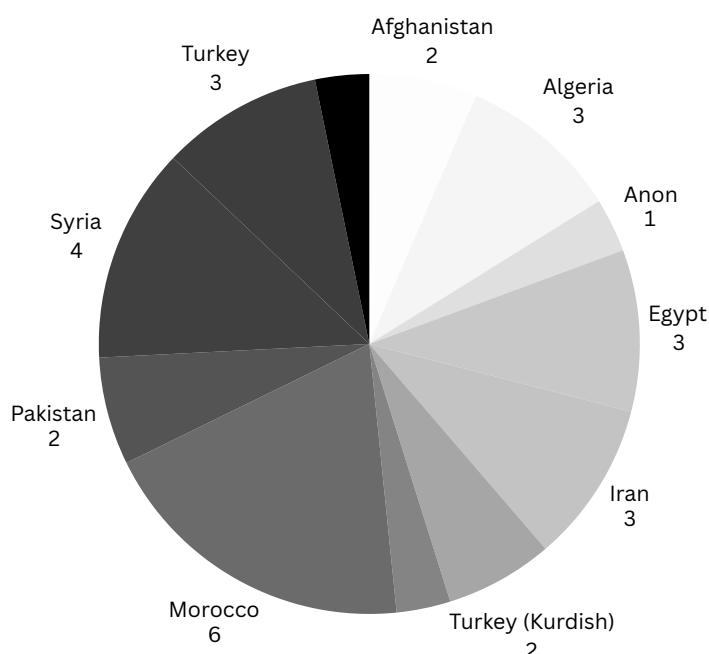




## (B) Demographics of respondents

The 31 interviewees with first-hand experience of police station detention were aged between 22 and 45, with an average age of 29. The sample was overwhelmingly male and of young adult age - although one interview concerned the detention of a woman and her teenage son.

*Diagram: Nationalities of interview respondents:*



Other foreign nationals detained in the same police stations as interviewees were overwhelmingly reported to be young (under 30) and male. A very limited number of interviewees reported the presence of women and minors in police station cells. Respondents reported being detained in cells with varying numbers of other foreign nationals - anywhere between a handful and over 50 - who were reportedly from similar countries of origin to the interview sample group: Afghanistan, Morocco, Iran, Egypt, Syria, Albania, Georgia, Pakistan, India, Palestine and Turkey.



## (C) Grounds for detention reported by respondents

The circumstances in which interview respondents were detained reflect the varied use of police facilities to detain foreign nationals. A significant number of respondents reported being detained in police stations due to being undocumented and were subsequently transferred to a Pre-Removal Detention Centre (PRDC). Many in this group came from countries which are considered to be safe by the Greek government, including Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> People of these nationalities make up a significant proportion of the population detained in Greece's pre-removal detention system, due to the limited possibilities they have to regularise their legal status, whether through the asylum system or other avenues. A much smaller proportion of interviewees reported being detained in a police station while facing criminal charges related to smuggling (which were reported to be false by respondents). A limited

number of respondents were detained in a police facility shortly after they crossed the land border from Turkey, and were subsequently transferred to the Fylakio Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) in order to register their asylum claim.



## **(D) Limitations of the research**

This report does not claim to offer a comprehensive analysis of police station detention in Greece. There are notable gaps in our data. One limitation relates to the semi-structured nature of the interviews. This format did not always allow for consistent questioning across all participants, meaning that not every interview covered all aspects of detention. As a result, some of the 31 interviews lacked information on specific conditions or experiences. Additionally, interviewees were not systematically asked about the presence of minors in police stations, which has previously been raised<sup>12</sup> as a key concern in Greece. Moreover, the police facilities we mention are not necessarily those where detainees face the worst conditions or where police violence is most prevalent. Nonetheless, this report offers important evidence on the persistence of detention in police stations and provides critical insight into the lived experiences of those subjected to it.



# 1 - LEGAL FRAMEWORK



## **(A) Overview of legal framework**

Greek law makes it clear that police stations should only be used when absolutely necessary and must not serve as places for prolonged detention. This applies both to people in administrative detention and those in pre-trial detention.

The first section below outlines the legal basis for detention in police stations based on Greek law. Even in relation to pre-trial detainees, Greek law is clear: police stations may only be used as a measure of last resort for detention and for the shortest possible time. In the second section we outline the legal provisions regarding the conditions of administrative detention, which are clearly outlined in both Greek and EU law and apply to detention in any facility, including police stations.



## **(B) Legal framework for detention in police departments**

The use of police stations for administrative detention is not provided for in primary legislation but is regulated by a 2009 ministerial decision.<sup>13</sup> According to this decision, detaining individuals in police stations under administrative detention is exceptionally permitted as a temporary and short-term measure, and only when pre-removal centres are unavailable.

Article 31(1) of Hellenic Law 3907/2011 governing the detention of third country nationals for administrative grounds stipulates that: “Detention takes place, as a rule, in designated facilities.” While this provision establishes the general principle that detention should occur in designated facilities, i.e. pre-removal centres designed for prolonged immigration detention, it also leaves room for exceptions. Notably, the wording does not impose an absolute obligation to detain individuals exclusively in such facilities.

A combined reading of Articles 76(3) and 81(1) of Hellenic Law 3386/2005 provides that, if an irregular migrant is suspected of being a fugitive, of posing a threat to public order, or of avoiding or obstructing the preparation of their departure or the removal procedure, the competent Police Commissioner may order their temporary detention until a removal decision is issued. In such cases, the person is “detained at the competent police authority”, which could include police stations. Crucially, the removal decision must be issued within three days, indicating that the law does not allow for prolonged detention under this provision.

Two Greek laws regulate the circumstances under which individuals undergoing criminal procedures may be held in police facilities: the Greek Penitentiary Code (Article 15) and Presidential Decree 141/1991 (Article 66, Paragraph 6). The Presidential Decree states that police stations detention should only happen if immediate transfer to a correctional facility is not possible, and should last only as long as is absolutely necessary.<sup>14</sup> In Greece, police detention facilities are not considered formal prisons or correctional institutions under the Greek Penitentiary Code. Instead, they are meant to be used only under specific legal conditions and for short-term custody only. The law<sup>15</sup> sets strict rules for holding detainees in police facilities, including the guarantee that their visitation and communication rights must not be restricted just because they are being held in a police facility.



## **(C) Legal framework for the conditions of detention in police departments**

Greek law sets clear standards for how people in detention should be treated, whether they are awaiting trial or facing deportation. Regardless of the length of detention or the type of facility, people deprived of their liberty must have unhindered access to basic rights and dignified living conditions, as outlined below.

### *Rights of Individuals in Administrative Detention*

Greek law (3907/2011, Article 31) aligns with the EU Return Directive and outlines basic rights for third country nationals held in detention before deportation<sup>16</sup>, which extends to detention in police stations. As such, the police authorities in these facilities are legally obliged to ensure access to emergency healthcare and necessary medical treatment, the right to contact family, lawyers and consular authorities, and clear information about their rights, including how to contact international and non-governmental organisations.

According to the Greek Asylum Code,<sup>17</sup> detained asylum seekers in Greece must be held in conditions that ensure access to open-air spaces, appropriate medical care, and legal representation. They must be allowed to communicate with family members, legal advisors, and accredited organisations, including UNHCR and its partners, under conditions that respect their privacy. Authorities are also required to systematically inform detainees of the rules and their rights in a language they can reasonably understand.

### *Right to Challenge Detention Orders and Inhumane Conditions*

According to Article 31 of Law 3907/2011, every third country national detained in view of removal has the right to raise objections against the detention order or a decision to prolong detention to the administrative court of first instance.

Article 6A of the Penitentiary Code, as recently amended by Article 8 of Law 4985/2022, allows any individual in detention to appeal to the Court for the Execution of Sentences if their living conditions violate human dignity. This came after multiple rulings by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) condemning Greece for poor detention conditions in police stations.<sup>18</sup>



## 2 - OVERVIEW: GREECE'S USE OF POLICE STATIONS FOR IMMIGRATION DETENTION

Although police detention is meant to be a short-term, exceptional measure, in practice, it is widely used in Greece - especially for irregular migrants. Reports from human rights organisations, the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT),<sup>20</sup> and the Greek Ombudsman,<sup>21</sup> have consistently documented severe shortcomings in the conditions in police stations. The ECtHR has repeatedly condemned Greece for inhuman and degrading detention conditions in police departments.<sup>22</sup> The Greek government made a commitment in 2009<sup>23</sup> to phase out the use of police stations and border guard departments for detaining irregular migrants,<sup>19</sup> and has since made similar promises.<sup>24</sup> Yet, as this report demonstrates, the use of police facilities for prolonged detention persists. In the following overview we outline how this practice is not a temporary or exceptional practice, but one with deep roots in the country's immigration control regime.



### (A) History

Since the 1990s, successive Greek governments have responded to immigration with measures designed to control. In the absence of legal frameworks or policy planning, local police stations - already widespread in urban and rural landscapes across the country - became the default sites of detention for the increasing numbers of migrants in the early 1990s. Police stations, border guard posts, and other improvised sites - never designed for prolonged or administrative detention - became key parts of Greece's expanding detention system.

Despite the creation of formal Pre-Removal Detention Centres (PRDCs) in the 2000s, police stations, especially the ones at border locations, continued to serve as overflow sites, first points of detention, and holding facilities for those who fell between legal categories, often without a paper trail<sup>25</sup>. Reports from the CPT and the Greek Ombudsman, throughout this decade, consistently documented inhuman and degrading conditions in police stations: filthy cells, no access to daylight or outdoor exercise, inadequate food and medical care, and no meaningful access to legal assistance. Despite mounting criticism, these practices not only persisted but were codified in operational policy.

In 2012, the 'Xenios Zeus' operation marked a turning point in institutionalising police station detention<sup>26</sup>. Presented as a public order initiative, its stated aim was combating irregular migration and reclaiming control over central Athens. The operation was a direct response to political pressure from the far-right, rising public hostility toward migrants, and fears about the concentration of undocumented migrants living in inner-city apartments - particularly in areas

like Agios Panteleimonas. The operation relied on mass identity checks and racial profiling, leading to the arrest and detention of thousands of foreign nationals, many of whom had legal residence or pending asylum claims.<sup>27</sup> The police stations of Athens and Thessaloniki, already stretched, became long-term holding sites for migrants in the years that followed. As one CSO lawyer recounted in research fieldwork conducted in 2019, a Pakistani man was discovered by chance during an ad-hoc visit of the CSO to a police station in Athens - he had been detained there for eight months without registration or record, unknown even to parts of the bureaucracy itself<sup>28</sup>. Throughout the 2010s and early 2020s police stations have continued to hold significant numbers of migrants, although government statistics show a decline in recent years, as outlined below.



## **(B) Official statistics**

It is difficult to assess the scale and nature of administrative detention in police stations, due to the limited data published by the authorities,<sup>29</sup> and the few official bodies monitoring conditions.

According to statistics published by the Hellenic Police, over the past five years the number of irregular migrants detained in police custody at the end of each year has steadily declined, from 1,021 in 2019 to 261 in 2023.<sup>30</sup> A similar decline can be observed among detained asylum seekers in police stations at the end of the year, dropping from 212 in 2019 to 14 in 2023. The sharp decrease observed in 2021 may be partly attributed to the official end of the practice of detaining unaccompanied minors in police facilities,<sup>31</sup> a policy shift announced by the Greek authorities in November of 2020.<sup>32</sup>

Year	Total Detainees in Police Facilities	Asylum Seekers in Police Facilities
2018 <sup>33</sup>	835	196
2019 <sup>34</sup>	1,021	212
2020 <sup>35</sup>	863	149
2021 <sup>36</sup>	380	35
2022 <sup>37</sup>	316	35
2023 <sup>38</sup>	261	14
2024 (June) <sup>39</sup>	422	*

However, the real scale of police detention remains unknown, despite requests for greater transparency from the authorities.<sup>40</sup> The above numbers only reflect the number of detainees at the end of each year. Other reports capturing the detention population on specific dates in the year record higher numbers - for instance reports by the Greek Ombudsman showing that according to data reported on 1/11 each year, 1,229 people were reported to be detained in police cells in 2020,<sup>41</sup> while in 2021 the number was 674.<sup>42</sup> This suggests that, over the course of a year, far more individuals cycle through police detention than end-of-year figures alone can reveal.



## **(C) Oversight and accountability**

Very few bodies are mandated to inspect the conditions in which foreign nationals are held in police station facilities in Greece. Drastic funding cuts announced in 2025<sup>43</sup> will likely further reduce the number of bodies responsible for monitoring in this context.

According to our research, the Greek Ombudsman and the CPT are the only bodies consistently conducting on-site visits to police stations to inspect the conditions and speak to detainees.<sup>44</sup> The CPT has carried out 17 monitoring visits to multiple police facilities in Greece since 1993, demonstrating the prevalence of poor conditions in police detention. The Greek Ombudsman visits police facilities once per year in the context of its monitoring of deportation procedures and prevention of torture and ill-treatment, including the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, analysed in Chapter 5, which has been used as a *de facto* pre-removal detention facility despite not being equipped for long-term detention. Under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, ratified by Greece in 2014, the Greek Ombudsperson was nominated as the National Preventive Mechanism, responsible for monitoring all public or private places of detention. Since 2015, when the new body became active, they have made multiple visits to PRDCs and police stations where migrants may be detained and published six annual special reports.<sup>45</sup>



## **(D) Detention conditions in police stations**

Detention conditions in police stations have historically been criticised as inhuman and degrading. Over time, rulings of the ECtHR have established a coherent body of case law that highlights the persistent and systemic nature of these violations<sup>46</sup>. The case of *Dougoz v. Greece* (2001)<sup>47</sup> was the first ECtHR judgement to condemn the use of police stations for the long-term detention of migrants, setting a legal precedent by ruling that such facilities were never intended or equipped for prolonged administrative detention and thus violated fundamental rights under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Similar violations were confirmed, among others, in *Kaja v. Greece* (2006)<sup>48</sup>, *Tabesh v. Greece* (2009)<sup>49</sup>, *Khuroshvili v. Greece* (2013)<sup>50</sup>, *Tatishvili v. Greece* (2014)<sup>51</sup>, *De los Santos and de la Cruz v. Greece* (2014)<sup>52</sup>, and *S.Z. v. Greece*

(2018)<sup>53</sup>, where detainees were held in overcrowded and unhygienic conditions, denied access to open air, subjected to inadequate medical care, and left in legal limbo for weeks or months. Many of these cases involved detention in police cells with no access to fresh air or showers, and detainees were provided with minimal bedding, if any at all.

Independent monitoring bodies, including the CPT<sup>54</sup> and the Greek Ombudsman, have consistently documented degrading conditions in police stations - such as lack of beds, ventilation, access to toilets, or basic hygiene infrastructure. Many of these facilities were deemed unfit even for short-term detention, with foreign nationals held for weeks or months. The Greek National Commission for Human Rights has warned that such conditions amount to violations of the right to life and dignity under the ECHR.<sup>55</sup>



## **(E) Ill-treatment and deaths in police stations**

The persistent use of police stations as detention sites in Greece has long been associated with degrading treatment, systemic violence, and - in the most extreme cases - deaths in custody. Recent deaths in police custody have brought renewed attention to this issue. In September 2024, Muhammad Kamran Ashiq, a 37-year-old Pakistani man who had lived in Greece for two decades, died in police custody at the Agios Panteleimonas police station in Athens. His body showed visible bruises and marks suggestive of physical abuse.<sup>56</sup> Just 10 days later, a 29-year-old Bangladeshi man was found dead in custody at the Omonoia Police Department. Though officially ruled a suicide, the circumstances of his death were opaque, and the incident occurred in a facility with a history of mistreatment allegations.<sup>57</sup> These cases are not isolated. According to investigations by the Hellenic League for Human Rights (HLHR)<sup>58</sup> and the European Data Journalism Network<sup>59</sup>, Greece has repeatedly failed to disclose data on deaths in custody, despite EU efforts to standardise reporting. Between 2020 and 2022, Greece was one of the few EU countries that did not publish official statistics, fuelling concerns over the scale of violence and impunity.

The Agios Panteleimonas and Omonoia police departments in central Athens are among the most notorious for police violence in Greece, previously linked to torture, ill-treatment, and deaths in custody. Both stations, located in areas with large migrant populations, have long histories of racialised policing and institutional impunity. Agios Panteleimonas was the site of a widely reported 2004 torture case involving Afghan nationals (*Sarwari and others v Greece*)<sup>60</sup>, while Omonia has faced repeated allegations of abuse and obstruction of investigations, including a 2008 death in custody documented by the CPT.<sup>61</sup> These incidents are not merely historical anomalies. The most recent CPT report from 2024<sup>62</sup> received several credible and consistent allegations of deliberate physical ill-treatment of detained foreign nationals by police officers in some police stations in Athens (Kolonos and Omonia Police Departments). This included several cases of alleged severe ill-treatment, which mainly consisted of blows with batons and the butt of a rifle, kicks, punches and/or slaps.



As noted in reports by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR), systemic failings in oversight, poor investigative procedures, and the removal or suppression of evidence point to entrenched patterns of institutional neglect.<sup>63</sup> The GNCHR has warned that these stations reflect broader systemic deficiencies in Greece's treatment of detainees, where deaths in custody are treated not as indicators of structural failure but as isolated events, routinely explained away without thorough investigation.



## **(F) Failures to investigate police violence**

One of the most consistent criticisms from the CPT and the ECtHR over the past three decades is the Greek authorities' failure to properly investigate allegations of police violence. In cases like *Galotskin v. Greece* (2023)<sup>64</sup>, the Court highlighted not just the abuse itself but also the lack of prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation.<sup>65</sup> Monitoring bodies have long noted that internal police investigations are rarely independent and often result in little to no accountability.<sup>66</sup>

The National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents (EMIDIPA), created in 2017, was intended to fill this gap. While it has improved documentation and visibility, it remains limited in power, lacking prosecutorial authority and relying on cooperation from the very police it monitors.<sup>67</sup> Its 2023 report noted recurring problems: missing video evidence, inconsistent reporting, and failure to interview key witnesses.<sup>68</sup> Institutional responses have largely been symbolic or procedurally limited. For example, while internal circulars have been issued to remind police officers of detainees' rights and the prohibition of ill-treatment, these measures lack enforcement mechanisms and have not been accompanied by meaningful training, monitoring, or reform of investigative procedures. A roundtable organised in 2019 by the Council of Europe and the Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court of Greece recognised the need for deeper reform,<sup>69</sup> but little has changed. As noted by the HLHR in its 2024 brief, the Greek authorities continue to treat police violence as the result of isolated incidents rather than systemic failings, and the reforms proposed to date have failed to address the entrenched impunity that enables abuse to continue.<sup>70</sup>



## **(G) Conclusion**

The prolonged use of police stations - designed only for short-term holding - as *de facto* long-term detention centres violates both Greek and international legal standards. Despite multiple judicial rulings, repeated recommendations by oversight bodies, and mounting evidence of deaths and ill-treatment in custody, the Greek authorities have failed to address the root causes of these systemic abuses.

# 3 - ANALYSIS: SURVEY RESPONSES FROM LAWYERS REPRESENTING DETAINED PEOPLE

This section presents an analysis of responses gathered from a survey conducted in early 2025 among lawyers representing individuals detained in police stations across Greece. All respondents (seven in total) were private lawyers with direct experience representing detained individuals. Their experience varied, with the number of detention cases handled ranging from one to 15. The relatively low number of responses partly reflects the limited number of legal professionals actively engaged in providing legal aid to people detained in police stations, highlighting a broader structural gap in legal support within the system.

Survey participants reported that their clients were detained in the following police departments across Greece:

- Nafplio Police Department, Peloponnese
- Argos Police Department, Peloponnese
- Poroia Police Department, northern Greece
- Omonoia Police Department, Athens
- Thessaloniki Aliens' Detention Centre,<sup>71</sup> Thessaloniki
- Agios Panteleimonas Police Department, Athens
- Athens Airport special holding facility, Attica
- Heraklion Police Department, Crete
- Chalandri Police Department, Athens
- Kordelio,<sup>72</sup> Thessaloniki

The survey responses indicate that most detained clients came from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Egypt. Survey respondents reported that their clients had been detained in one or more of five different PRDCs after their police detention.



## (A) Duration and legality of detention

The duration of detention in police stations varied significantly, ranging from three to 10 days without clear procedural justification. In some cases, delays in facilitating legal communication may have extended periods of detention unnecessarily.

Four out of seven respondents believed that the police detention of their clients was illegal, largely because formal detention orders were not issued. In some cases, lawyers reported that only short-term detention orders (up to 10 days) were issued, but in other instances, no formal orders existed at all.



## **(B) Access to clients in police detention**

Respondents expressed concerns about restricted communication with their clients in police detention. Some lawyers reported obstacles such as the inability to contact clients by phone, clients not having uninterrupted access to their mobile phones, and being denied entry to the police station to consult with their clients alongside an interpreter - despite the presence of language barriers. These challenges not only hinder effective legal representation but also point to systemic issues that infringe upon the right to access lawyers and information on their legal rights during police detention, as enshrined in Greek law.<sup>73</sup>



## **(C) Conditions in police stations**

Survey respondents shared that the people they represented frequently reported issues related to a range of poor and inhumane conditions in police stations, including:

**Lack of access to interpreters**, making legal and procedural navigation extremely difficult. In one case, officers at Agios Panteleimonas Police Department, denied the detained client access to an interpreter, using the excuse that the detainee spoke some Greek (although not well enough to understand legal concepts).

**Overcrowding and unsanitary conditions**, with detainees forced to stay in unhygienic environments and with no access to basic hygiene items and healthcare services.

**Limited or no access to food and drinking water**. In one case, although the person detained did not eat pork (as he was Muslim), the only food offered to him once a day contained pork.

**Exposure to extreme temperatures**, either excessive cold or heat, without proper ventilation.

**No access to outdoor spaces.**

**No access to mobile phones.**

Lawyers therefore reported conditions faced by their clients in police detention which are in clear violation of Greek and EU law (see Chapter 1).



## **(D) Reports of ill-treatment**

Lawyers described serious allegations of mistreatment and abuse in police detention reported by the people they represented, including:

**Physical violence:** Some lawyers reported that their clients experienced direct physical abuse from police officers. For example, one of the survey respondents reported that his client, detained at Agios Panteleimonas Police Department, suffered physical violence. When his friends attempted to visit him, the police officers reportedly threatened to beat him if they insisted on seeing him.

**Verbal abuse and hate speech:** Lawyers reported that their clients were exposed to racial slurs, insults, and threats from officers working in police stations.

**Theft of personal belongings:** Some detainees reported to lawyers that their money or possessions were taken during their detention in a police station and never returned. A lawyer reported that a detained client had informed them that his asylum seeker's card was inside his bag, which was being held in the desk of the duty officer. However, when the lawyer requested it to use as his identification document, the police officers first instructed them to wait outside the office and later claimed that the document was not there.



## (E) Conclusion

The insights from lawyers representing people detained in police stations highlight serious concerns about the legality of police detention, in addition to the limited possibilities for detained people to access effective legal support, even in cases when they manage to secure the support of a lawyer. Confiscation of mobile phones and the obstructive behaviour of the authorities, create conditions in which people struggle to access information on their rights and legal representation. Additionally, complaints regarding poor conditions and ill-treatment in police stations reported to lawyers by their clients, reflect many of the same issues reported by detainees in the following chapter.



*Image: Didymoteicho Border Guard Department, Evros. 2022. Credit: LK.*



## 4 - ANALYSIS: INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE DETAINED IN POLICE STATIONS

This chapter presents an analysis of 31 interviews with people who experienced detention in a police station at some point between 2020 and 2025. A map showing the locations of police stations in which respondents were detained can be found on page 3 and a list of all police departments with links to corresponding site profiles on the *Detention Landscapes* platform can be found on page 4.

64% of respondents reported being detained in a police station for more than 7 days, and 30% for over 30 days, despite police station detention being permitted only as a temporary, short-term measure. The average detention period in a police station across all interviews was 29 days. Notably, in 90% of cases, interviewees experienced a further period of detention in a PRDC (80% of interviews) or a criminal prison (10% of interviews). The overall extremely extended detention periods experienced by respondents in multiple facilities exacerbated their feelings of frustration and perceived injustice.

Reported Length of Detention in a Police Station	
Length of Detention	Percentage of Testimonies
Less than 24 hours	7%
1-7 days	30%
8-14 days	7%
14-30 days	27%
More than 30 days	30%



### (A) The conditions in police stations

The conditions in police stations were consistently reported to be inhumane and damaging to detainees' physical and mental health in interviews.

### *Lack of access to outdoors*

Respondents overwhelmingly reported that they were not allowed to go outside for exercise during the time they were detained in a police station. In one case ([548858](#) - 2024), the respondent reported that detainees were allowed to go outside within an enclosed yard space for three hours during the day. The lack of access to yard time was particularly alarming given the average length of detention in police cells of 29 days, and the reports of extremely poor conditions outlined below. The Greek Ombudsman has repeatedly emphasised that the lack of outdoor space for fresh air and exercise renders police departments unsuitable for stays beyond 24 hours.<sup>74</sup>

### *Overcrowding, poor hygiene conditions and lack of natural light and ventilation*

The cells in which respondents experienced their detention were frequently described as dark, with little or no natural light (e.g. [571815](#) - 2022) and ventilation ([305739](#) - 2025; [182824](#) - 2024; [217590](#) - 2023). Almost all respondents reported cells being overcrowded and cramped, with no privacy (e.g. [394433](#) - 2021; [879003](#) - 2022; [638515](#) - 2022). One of the most extreme cases concerned a man who reported being detained along with 11 others in Marousi Police Department, Athens, in a room which was described as a dark basement without any natural light. The respondent was reportedly held in these conditions for 74 days, sharing one toilet with 11 other detainees ([861487](#) - 2022). The cell in which a Libyan man was detained in Katerini Police Department reportedly measured 40 square metres and accommodated up to 54 people during his detention there ([276226](#) - 2024). Another noteworthy case was the detention of an Algerian man in Agios Athanasios Immigration Management Department, close to Thessaloniki, in a small cell for one month. He reported sharing the space with 10-14 other detainees during this time ([170512](#) - 2021).

Hygiene standards were reported to be substandard in 100% of the interviews where this question was addressed. Cells where detainees were held were frequently reported to be dirty, dusty, and infested with insects including cockroaches (e.g. [276226](#) - 2024). For instance, a respondent detained in a police station in Thessaloniki (possibly the Neapoli-Sykies police facility, although it was not specifically identified by the respondent) described the facility as unclean, with mattresses infested with bed bugs ([30460](#) - 2022). In some facilities such as Larissa Police Department, cleaners reportedly visited once per week ([548858](#) - 2024), however in practice according to one respondent: “when you come back it seems like it hasn’t been cleaned”. In other interviews (e.g. [305739](#) - 2025) the respondent reported that detainees were provided with cleaning products and cleaned the cell themselves.

The presence of bed bugs in mattresses provided to detainees led some to opt for sleeping on the floor of the police cell ([304605](#) - 2022). Dilapidated infrastructure was sometimes linked to poor hygiene conditions, for instance broken toilets: the Didymoteicho Border Guard Department was described by one respondent as smelling strongly of sweat and urine and toilet facilities were reportedly broken ([394433](#) - 2021). A woman detained in a police facility close to Didymoteicho<sup>75</sup> reported that the bathroom was not working and the cell was dirty: “It smelled like urine” ([902637](#) - 2022). In the General Police Directorate of Attica, an Iranian man reported being provided with unwashed blankets containing remnants of bodily fluids from previous detainees: “they [previously detained people] had cleaned their noses or peed on the blanket and the police would provide the same blanket for us, not a new one” ([992177](#) - 2021).



“

“That place was like a prison. It was very dark and unhygienic [...] I have seen a lot of difficult situations of people thinking about committing suicide.”

Man detained in Poroia Police Department,  
Serres prefecture, for two weeks in 2022  
(960623).

“One day felt like one week, because you have nothing to play with or lose time with. One hour feels like three hours”

Man detained in Idomeni Police Department  
for 26 days in 2023  
(217590).

“If you have any problem, they only give you Depon [painkiller]. For example, if I have cancer, they give me Depon. That is crazy”

Man detained in the Thessaloniki Special  
Holding Facility for three and a half months in  
2024  
(182824)



### *Inadequate temperature control*

Police stations were reported to generally have inadequate infrastructure to regulate temperature, as has been noted in reports of the CPT.<sup>76</sup> Several respondents detained during autumn and winter reported that there was no heating in facilities, exacerbated by limited provision of blankets to keep detainees warm at night (e.g. [638515](#) - 2022; [747364](#) - 2023; [30460](#) - 2022). Of the conditions in [Larissa Police Department](#), one respondent reported: "All the cold gets inside because there are no proper windows. There are no proper mattresses or things to cover yourself from the cold" ([548858](#) - 2024). In a testimony shared by a man detained in the Promachonas Border Guard Department, the respondent reported that he was detained for 20 days in very cold temperatures, without heating and hot water was only available for approximately one hour per day ([305739](#) - 2025).

### *No provision of beds*

Most respondents reported that there were no beds in cells but only mattresses, which in some cases were thin or insufficient in number, leading to detainees sleeping on cement floors or blocks (e.g. [276226](#) - 2024; [267852](#) - 2024; [548858](#) - 2024). In one very concerning case a detainee received verbal abuse from officials when they were found to be using more than one mattress ([638515](#) - 2022). In both [Larissa Police Department](#) and Promachonas Border Guard Department, detainees reported having to sleep on cement blocks instead of beds ([548858](#) - 2024; [305739](#) - 2025). In the [Attica General Police Directorate](#) in Athens, an Iranian man reported that due to the fluctuating numbers of people detained in one cell, at times detainees were forced to sleep on the floor ([992177](#) - 2021).

### *Deprivation of adequate food*

According to testimonies, detainees in police stations are provided with a daily allowance of €5.87 to purchase food and other necessities from external providers who visit police facilities. Some specified that they were given a list of items which they could purchase with this allowance, and had to place "orders" with the police staff. Items were then delivered to the police station by a private company.

Respondents reported that €5.87 was insufficient to purchase enough food, and items delivered by private contractors were reported to be more expensive than normal ([879003](#) - 2022; [638515](#) - 2022; [170512](#) - 2021; [276226](#) - 2024). A man detained in the Promachonas Border Guard Department close to Bulgaria, reported that the price of one sandwich delivered to the facility by a private supplier was €3. Respondents reported varying prices for products in different police departments, suggesting differing practices depending on the location of the police department and the private company contracted to provide food to detainees.

In some interviews respondents reported that they were deprived of food and drinking water while detained in a police station (e.g. [571815](#) - 2022; [902637](#) - 2022). For instance, a man detained in [Poroia Police Department](#) reported that he was not provided with any food during the two days he was held there ([960623](#) - 2022). Similarly, a man detained in [Didymoteicho Border Guard Department](#) for two nights reported that he was not given food or water to drink



during this time (975916 - 2022). Drinking water was not provided to another detainee at Didymoteicho Border Guard Department while detained there for two days, even when requested (394433 - 2021). A man detained in Promachonas Border Guard Department reported that he was not provided with food during the initial few days of his detention (732877 - 2025). An Iranian man detained in Kissamos Police Department in Crete stated: “When I asked for water, they [the police officers] told me ‘you can drink water from the toilets’” (276226 - 2024).

Detainees in police stations also reported issues related to specific dietary requirements. A man detained in Larissa Police Department for 40 days reported that he had a health condition requiring him to eat certain foods, however the authorities had failed to bring him the correct food he needed despite promising on multiple occasions to do so (548858 - 2024).

#### *No provision of basic items*

Police stations are not designed for long term detention and do not systematically provide basic items to detainees, such as shampoo, soap, clothes and other hygiene products. Detainees reported that basic necessities had to be purchased with the €5.87 daily allowance, yet this amount was more often used to purchase food or phone cards. One respondent reported that they had to wear the same clothes for over two months while in police detention, due to the lack of laundry facilities or provision of clothes by the authorities (861487 - 2022).



## **(B) Deprivation of access to healthcare**

There is a complete absence of on-site medical help in police stations.<sup>77</sup> The effects of lack of available medical assistance were reported to be wide-ranging, with people sharing that their medical conditions went untreated, including issues such as skin problems which were directly the result of poor hygiene conditions in police stations. A man detained for one month at Agios Athanasios Immigration Management Department reported that he became sick from drinking unclean water at the facility. He was unable to buy bottled water due to its high price and the minimal allowance provided to detainees (170512 - 2021). A man detained in Attica General Police Directorate shared that access to medical care was limited at the facility, with only paracetamol provided to detainees. He further stated: “People were fainting in the room and asking to call an ambulance or doctor. The police told us that it’s nothing” (992177 - 2021).

In some interviews respondents reported that they were taken to hospital by police to access healthcare treatment. However, they were not always adequately informed of what was happening during hospital transfers and appointments, creating distress and alarm (638515 - 2022; 305739 - 2025; 732877 - 2025). In some cases, respondents underwent blood tests and were given medication in hospitals, however they were not informed why this was happening (732877 - 2025). There were no translators present in hospitals, making the situation even more confusing and distressing. One person reported that he was handcuffed during the entire transportation and at the hospital (638515 - 2022). In other cases detainees had to wait for several days to access urgent medical treatment for injuries (960623 - 2022) or reported that they were only transferred to hospital following pressure from their lawyer (170512 - 2021).



## **(C) Inadequate access to legal support**

Respondents generally reported feeling disempowered, afraid and uninformed about their rights in police detention. Several people reported that they wished to apply for asylum and expressed this will to the authorities while detained in a police station, however these requests were ignored or not followed up on (515404 - 2023; 861487 - 2022; 168149 - 2022; 571815 - 2022; 902637 - 2022). Some respondents reported that they presented at police stations close to the Evros border shortly after crossing into Greece, in order to submit an asylum application, but were subsequently arrested and detained (571815 - 2022).

At the Athens airport holding facility, one respondent's request for access to a lawyer was ignored by officials (253395 - 2025). She was only able to access one through the support of another detainee, who put her in contact with a legal CSO. A woman detained in a police station close to Didymoteicho reported that she was only able to access a lawyer at the police station through the support of friends who put her in contact with one (902637 - 2022).

Lack of access to legal support was critical in certain cases where the respondent reported that they were falsely accused of smuggling (230919 - 2022). In one case, the respondent was reportedly forced to sign a document, which was translated into Arabic, admitting his guilt. He described being forced to sign this document without the presence of a lawyer.



## **(D) Restricted access to communication means**

Based on testimonies, confiscation of mobile phones during police detention is standard practice (e.g. 638515 - 2022; 975916 - 2022; 902637 - 2022; 992177 - 2021). One man detained at the Attica General Police Directorate in Athens reported that although he was informed of his right to contact a lawyer and family and friends, he was unable to do so due to having his phone confiscated at the Agios Panteleimonas Police Department (992177 - 2021). A woman detained in

**“With €5.87, how can you call somebody?  
Do you have to stay without food to call  
somebody?”**

Man detained in the Promachonas Border  
Guard Department close to the Bulgarian  
border for 20 days in 2025  
(305739).

**“I needed my phone in order to check  
something on my gmail, such as my [asylum  
application] rejection that I received on my  
email, just to check it and show it to  
somebody. But they refused even if it was  
for that purpose, they never allow us to use  
our phones”**

Man detained in the Thessaloniki Special  
Holding Facility for 25 days in 2024  
(927604)

Athens airport holding facility reported that she had limited access to her phone while held there: “During the time we were there, sometimes I asked, “I want to call my family”. Then they give you [your mobile phone] maybe for 10 minutes, you speak to your family, they take it back again”. She reported that the authorities did not provide her with a rationale for confiscating her phone (253395 - 2025). A 22-year-old Syrian man reported that his mobile phone was confiscated during his detention at Orestiada Police Directorate, and officers there asked him to remove the requirement to enter a password to unlock the phone (230919 - 2022). His phone was not returned, even after release. A man from Libya who was detained for 20 days at Katerini Police Department without access to his mobile phone, reported that he had to spend €4 out of the daily allowance of €5.87 on a phone card in order to use the police station’s phone line to make expensive international calls to his family (276226 - 2024).



## **(E) Lack of provision of translation and interpretation services**

The lack of professional translators working in police stations emerged as a key complaint from interviewed people (304605 - 2022), reflecting the general lack of infrastructure to facilitate the specific needs of foreign people in police stations, and intersected with complaints regarding unhelpful, inattentive or aggressive behaviour of officials, sometimes in response to requests for translation help.

In some interviews the respondent reported that there was an interpreter present at the police station but they did not speak their language. This was reported even by those who spoke Farsi (879003 - 2022) or Urdu (638515 - 2022), which are widely spoken by detained people in Greece. Some respondents communicated that they did not know the reason for their detention and connected this to the lack of translation to allow them to receive and request information from the authorities (182824 - 2024).

An Afghan man who was detained for five days at Kilkis Police Department reported that he experienced nausea while detained and had to resort to banging on his cell door in order to get the attention of police officers, in the absence of interpretation assistance to help him communicate with the authorities (747364 - 2023).

Further to this, lack of translation services resulted in detained people signing documents written in a language they could not understand, and without understanding their contents or legal significance. Respondents generally reported that they signed at least one document which they did not understand the contents of and in some cases several (217590 - 2023). Translation was not provided, including in cases where people explicitly requested this (253395 - 2025, 217590 - 2023), and respondents generally reported that police officers provided minimal information regarding official documents and verbally pressured detainees to sign.

Concerningly, in the case of an English-speaking woman detained at Athens holding facility with her teenage son, she was provided with documents written in a language she identified as Arabic but the request for translation help was met with a lack of interest from the authorities. In this case, her teenage son was reportedly also required to sign documentation without translation,

and in a separate room from his mother. Her conclusion was clear: “We don’t know what we signed actually.” In some cases respondents reported that officials working in police stations provided them with useful information, for instance regarding the possibility for them to apply for asylum in Greece, but this was only possible in cases where the official and the respondent happened to share a language (e.g. English - [217590](#) - 2023). In one case (e.g. [747364](#) - 2023) the respondent reported being forced to sign documentation while being subjected to prolonged isolation in a dark room within a police station. In one case the respondent reported that they had to sign a document daily which they did not understand, in order to receive food ([217590](#) - 2023).



## (F) Reports of violence and ill-treatment

In 88% of interviews where the question was addressed the respondents reported violent behaviour from police during their apprehension<sup>78</sup> or detention. 91% of these reported incidents (20/22) consisted of either physical violence (7/22), verbal violence (insults, hate speech, intimidation) (8/22), or both (5/22).

Reported incidents included the use of racist slurs ([304605](#) - 2022), insults ([638515](#) - 2022), destruction of personal property including legal documents ([304605](#) - 2022; [276226](#) - 2024), theft of detainees’ money and personal belongings ([230919](#) - 2022; [515404](#) - 2023; [638515](#) - 2022; [168149](#) - 2022; [571815](#) - 2022; [902637](#) - 2022; [170512](#) - 2021; [992177](#) - 2021), threats and intimidation ([230919](#) - 2022; [992177](#) - 2021), physical beatings ([230919](#) - 2022; [992177](#) - 2021; [732877](#) - 2025).

Respondents generally reported that they lacked agency while in police detention and did not feel able to exercise their rights, sometimes stemming from fear of ill-treatment by police. One Syrian man explained the behaviour of police at [Didymoteicho Police Department](#) as “not [...] formal”, further explaining that: “police take you, they decide for themselves what to do with you and you have no right to say anything” ([571815](#) - 2022). A Kurdish man described experiencing the following feelings while detained at [Didymoteicho Border Guard Department](#): “there was nowhere really to rest - conditions were very bad and there is also the fear that you don’t know what the police will do to you” ([975916](#) - 2022).



Image: Feres Border Guard Station, Evros. 2022. Credit: LK.



### *Physical abuse by police officers*

Violence was reported by respondents with diverse demographic backgrounds and in multiple police facilities across the country. This typically took the form of physical beatings, inflicted by uniformed police officers within the police station facility. In some cases the respondent specified the extended nature of these beatings, lasting between 5-10 minutes (276226 - 2024) or happening repeatedly over a period of two hours (732877 - 2025). In some interviews the respondent reported being beaten by multiple police officers at the same time.

In one incident reported by a 22-year-old Syrian man, his head was held on top of a rock while officers beat his face (230919 - 2022). Violent beatings by officers at Agios Athanasios Immigration Management Department were reported by an Algerian man detained there in 2021, who reported being beaten with batons, hands and kicks (170512 - 2021).

In some extremely concerning cases, respondents reported experiencing violent treatment in the form of physical beatings from police in response to requests for information on their rights in detention (733425 - 2022), or for food and water. A man detained in the Promachonas Border Guard Department reported that he experienced physical beatings from a police officer at the detention facility, after he started shouting to demand to be given food (732877 - 2025).

Similarly, an Afghan man detained in Kilkis Police Department reported that he experienced beatings from police in response to his requests for food and water: "one of the police got angry and he was hitting me" (747364 - 2023); these beatings reportedly included use of batons, leading the respondent to fall to the ground. He further stated: "Then also [...] they were hitting my testicle in my private area". The respondent reported that as a result of physical violence inflicted by police, he fainted and later woke up in a hospital bed. He reported being unable to properly walk for roughly one month after the incident, due to the severity of the beatings. In some interviews (394433 - 2021), respondents reported hearing beatings being inflicted on detainees in other cells, but were not directly impacted.

A man detained at Katerini Police Department for 37 days reported a disturbing practice whereby officers at the facility reportedly changed into black clothing and removed their badges "if they heard that there was a migrant around and they wanted to go out and get them" (638515 - 2022). The respondent further explained he witnessed several incidents in which officers changed into black clothing and subsequently returned to the police station with one or more new detainees.

### *Isolation*

Two cases of isolation were reported in testimonies. A man reported being held in a dark room within Orestiada Police Directorate for a period of 14 days, where he was provided with food twice per day but was only able to access water from the bathroom tap (230919 - 2022). In a second case the respondent reported that he was held in a toilet within a police station which he could not specifically identify, located approximately thirty minutes by car from the Greek-North Macedonian border (747364 - 2023). The respondent reported that he was held in the toilet for

**“One of the police officers came and stood close to my eyes. Then he pushed my head with one hand and I fell. When I stood up, all the police started attacking me [...] When I came home, for 10 days I could not walk because of the pain. It hurt me a lot. Alongside the physical problems, I have mental problems”**

Man detained in two police departments on Crete in 2024  
(276226).

**“He used the baton only. I put my hand so he wouldn’t hit my head. So then he was hitting my hand [...] I didn’t do anything and he was hitting me”**

Man detained in the Promachonas Border Guard Department close to the Bulgarian border for 21 days in 2025  
(732877)

approximately 40 hours without being given any food or water. The toilet had a small window with no natural light and the environment was described as completely dark.



## **(G) Conclusion**

Interviews confirm a recurring pattern of poor conditions and ill-treatment in police departments over time and across the country, from facilities located close to the land border in Evros, to police departments in major cities and rural areas. In particular, reports from people with experience of detention convey the deeply harmful effects of prolonged detention in police facilities, on detainees’ physical and mental health, and access to basic rights such as legal information on their rights in detention, and assistance issuing appeals or complaints.

## 5 - SITE PROFILE: SPECIAL HOLDING FACILITY OF THE THESSALONIKI ALIENS POLICE DIRECTORATE



Image: Metagogon (Transfers) Centre/Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility.  
Credit: Spyros Mousias, 2021.

The Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility is located on the floor above the Metagogon (Transfers) Centre,<sup>79</sup> situated in the suburb of Menemeni in the western outskirts of Thessaloniki. The Special Holding Facility is one of five facilities under the responsibility of the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate<sup>80</sup> and is housed in an old factory warehouse building,<sup>81</sup> without appropriate infrastructure for long-term detention. The Special Holding Facility comprises nine holding cells and an auxiliary cell<sup>82</sup> with a total area of 590 square metres.<sup>83</sup> According to a report of the Greek Ombudsman, the building's structure is unable to support built-in beds, meaning that detainees in the holding facility must sleep on the floor.<sup>84</sup> Despite the Ombudsman's proposal in 2020<sup>85</sup> to relocate the facility to a more appropriate building, no progress has been made in this regard.<sup>86</sup> The CPT noted following its visit in 2016 that the Holding Facility consists of eight cells holding foreign nationals undergoing removal procedures and one cell detaining people with criminal charges.<sup>87</sup>

This section analyses data from interviews alongside observations made by the CPT following its last visit to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility in July 2016. The Committee called for immediate and urgent action at this time,<sup>88</sup> in response to the appalling conditions documented during its visit. Sadly, interviews indicate that the same fundamental issues persist, including the total absence of medical staff in the facility. Moreover, detainees continued to report extended detention in these conditions, despite clear standards laid down by the Greek Ombudsman that the facility is utterly unsuitable for detention beyond 24 hours due to the lack of access to outdoors.<sup>89</sup>

#### Overview of interview data:

We spoke with nine people who were detained at the Special Holding Facility after the last visit of the CPT in 2016.<sup>90</sup> Respondents frequently reported that the reason for their detention was unclear to them. In two cases, they reported being in the asylum procedure during their detention at the Special Holding Facility. Five respondents were undocumented and subsequently transferred to a Pre-Removal Detention Centre. In two cases, the individuals were transferred to criminal prisons following their detention at the facility on charges of smuggling. Across all testimonies, respondents reported being detained in the holding facility for between five days and 122 days, with an average length of 36 days.



### **(A) Poor conditions inside police cells**

Following its visit to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility in 2016, the CPT reported that conditions had not improved since its visit in 2013.<sup>91</sup> Similar issues were reiterated in the CPT's follow up report, including the dilapidated conditions of showers and toilets, and the lack of access to outdoor spaces for detainees to exercise. The CPT visited the facility in July, and humidity was reported to be extremely high, with air conditioning almost never switched on.

Interviews indicate that at least until June 2024, detainees at the Special Holding Facility continued to sleep on mattresses on the floor, without proper built-in beds<sup>92</sup> (927604 - 2024). The cells were described as square, with a toilet and shower inside, and in some cases a TV (217590 - 2023). Respondents consistently reported that they were not allowed outside during their detention at the facility, instead having to stay inside cells with limited natural light and ventilation (183177 - 2024), and in some cases specified that cells are locked at all times and detainees are even allowed to roam outside of their cells within the corridors (217590 - 2023; 230919 - 2022).

Blankets and mattresses in cells were reportedly infested with bed bugs (183177 - 2024; 515404 - 2023; 217590 - 2023), in some cases causing skin problems for detainees<sup>93</sup> (217590 - 2023). Numerous dysfunctions were reported including broken showers (183177 - 2024) and windows, lack of electricity and running water at certain times (183177 - 2024), and insufficient heating<sup>94</sup> (183177 - 2024). Hunger strikes against the poor living conditions were reported in early 2024 (182824 - 2024).



### **(B) Allegations of police violence against detainees**

Following its last visit in 2016, the CPT reported that it received several allegations of physical violence by police officers working at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, including slaps to the face, kicks and punches to various parts of the body and reiterated its recommendation that the Greek authorities take action to counter acts of ill-treatment in holding facilities for irregular migrants.<sup>95</sup> The Committee specifically documented extremely concerning reports that detainees were physically ill-treated by police officers for having requested information on their situation or



Left image: The Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility and the Transfers Sub-Directorate, Menemeni, Thessaloniki. Date: December 2021. Credit: Spyros Mousias.

Bottom image: Satellite imagery showing the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility and the Transfers Sub-Directorate (highlighted). Credit: Google Earth/2014 Airbus.



“

“You stay there, and you ask them [the authorities], “when will I go out?” and they tell you “maybe it will take 6 months, we don’t know exactly””

Man detained at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility for two and a half months in 2023  
(217590)

“You don’t have [any]thing [...] you don’t have money. One sandwich in one day. One bottle of water for one day. You don’t have anything about your health, about your body, you don’t have soap or shampoo, nothing”

Man detained at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility for three and a half months in 2024  
(182824)





to be provided with basic necessities such as water, a mattress, blanket or medication. Legal practitioners with experience representing clients detained in the Special Holding Facility reported that physical abuse at this facility was very common, with police officers referring to beatings as “massage”, and reportedly inflicted mainly upon detainees as punishment for complaining to the authorities about the conditions of their detention.<sup>96</sup>

One respondent reported direct physical ill-treatment from officers at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility ([549133](#) - 2020). This individual explained: “It was very stressful, I couldn’t go outside from where I was, I was in a cage all the day - I didn’t know how much time I was gonna spend there. Sometimes because of this stress and these things, I would fight with the policemen. A lot of the time I would get beaten and experience violence from the policemen there.”

Another respondent reported that he believed a man who arrived after him in the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility had been subjected to police violence during his apprehension, due to the visible injuries on his body. This respondent reported that the man arrived in the same cell as him and “his eye was very damaged and like blood spilling from it” ([927604](#) - 2024). Other interviewees reported verbal abuse from authorities at the holding facility ([183177](#) - 2024; [217590](#) - 2023). Communication with authorities was reported to be generally very difficult, with police officers appearing to be impatient, indifferent or resentful towards detainees’ requests for information or basic items.

## Analysis of contracts:

Whilst interviews refer to dirty and unhygienic conditions, procurement documents related to the operation of the Metagon Transfers Centre (including the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility) state that the cells and toilets of the facility are to be cleaned daily, with the exception of national holidays.<sup>97</sup> However, the contracts allocate one person to clean an area of 600 square metres in an hour. Disinfection, insecticide and pest control services are apparently procured for the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility as well as other facilities under the operation of the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate.<sup>98</sup>

According to procurement documents, the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate paid a total of €83,113.33 in 2024 and €109,763.13 in 2023 to private contractors to provide food to people detained in police facilities under its operation. This amounts to a daily allowance of €5.87 provided to detainees, based on the numbers provided in administrative documents. Notably, this amount has been the standard allowance provided to detainees in police stations, prisons and other immigration detention centres since at least 2005.<sup>99</sup> The CPT highlighted following a monitoring visit to Greek police detention facilities in 2013 that the amount was insufficient to purchase necessary nutrition and other products required during prolonged detention, as “purchases are often made at commercial prices from restaurants”.<sup>100</sup>

Calls for tender issued by the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate specify that private contractors must provide a different cooked meat or vegetarian dish for lunch each day of the week, in addition to salad, cheese, bread and fruit.<sup>101</sup> The Directorate signed a contract signed with Papadakis Food in 2024 to provide food to detainees, including in the Special Holding Facility. The contract indicates that the costs of individual lunch

dishes range between €2.70 and €5.10, and €1.50 to €1.80 for salads, bread and other accompaniments.<sup>102</sup>

The experiences of detainees with the provision of food at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility reflect concerns expressed by civil society organisations and ECtHR court decisions regarding the adequacy of this amount and more widely the system of catering provision through private contractors.<sup>103</sup> Concerns regarding the quality and sufficiency of food provided through catering contracts in various types of facilities in Greece - including refugee camps, Closed Controlled Access Centres, PRDCs and police departments - have been previously raised by human rights bodies, civil society and media.<sup>104</sup>



### **(C) Inadequate access to food and basic items**

Following its visit in 2016 the CPT reported that the Hellenic Police provision of €5.87 per day to cover all needs of detained people was “totally insufficient”, further stating: “The current financial provision was established to cover the needs of criminal suspects held in police stations for a short period, not those of immigration detainees held for prolonged periods”.<sup>105</sup>

Interviews confirm that the financial allowance provided to detainees has not increased. The €5.87 provision could reportedly cover the cost of three small sandwiches (183177 - 2024). However this allowance was also relied on to purchase medicine and hygiene products (885914 - 2022). Basic necessities such as toilet paper, bottled water and cleaning supplies all had to be purchased by detainees using this allowance (183177 - 2024). One respondent reported that detainees had to rely on personal savings to purchase basic items while detained at the Special Holding Facility (927604 - 2024).



### **(D) Lack of access to healthcare and psychosocial support**

The CPT noted during its visit in 2016 that conditions at the Special Holding Facility amounted to a public health risk. At that time, most detainees had skin infections, including scabies, and two people were suspected of having tuberculosis. The Committee additionally reported a number of suicide attempts at the facility, and the absence of counselling or suicide-prevention measures in place.

Interviews with people detained since 2016 indicate that these issues have persisted. One respondent reported a skin complaint arising from bedbugs in the cells to officials working at the facility and reported that he asked for help for three consecutive days before being transferred to the hospital (217590 - 2023). At the time of interview, this man reported that he continued to suffer from this skin condition. Several respondents reported that medical care was limited to paracetamol (183177 - 2024; 182824 - 2024). Other respondents reported indifference and neglect by police officers in response to requests for medical attention (e.g. 182824 - 2024).



## (E) Inadequate access to legal rights and information

Most respondents detained at the Holding Facility reported confusion about the grounds for their detention, particularly those who were in the process of applying for asylum (182824 - 2024). This situation was not helped by the general unhelpfulness of police and the lack of professional translators in the facility (183177 - 2024), further preventing detainees from understanding their legal situation. One respondent shared that he was given documents written in Greek, which he could not understand, and no translation was offered. He added that legal support was only available to those with money to pay for a private lawyer (927604 - 2024).



## (F) Denial of access to communication means

During its 2016 visit the CPT noted that detainees were denied access to personal belongings at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility. Several respondents specifically reported that personal mobile phones were confiscated during their detention in the holding facility (e.g. 217590 - 2023; 182824 - 2024), and the only way to make phone calls was through a paid fixed phone in the police station (217590 - 2023). In order to use this phone, detainees reportedly have to buy a phone card using the same allowance provided for food. As one person shared: “If you want to talk with your family, [you need to buy a card with] four minutes on it. But you cannot buy it. If you buy it, you stay hungry” (217590 - 2023).

The two Iranian men detained at the Special Holding Facility at the same time reported: “we didn’t eat for one day, two days, three days, for one [phone] card. We saved money for one card [...] With one €4 card and one Greek sim card, you can speak for half an hour, maybe forty minutes” (182824 - 2024). The same phone card was also used by the respondents to contact their lawyer regarding their asylum case.

### Analysis of contracts:

Administrative records show that the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate spent at least €13,790.15 on prescription medicines for detainees at the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility between March 2020 and January 2025.<sup>106</sup> During this time the Directorate awarded contracts to a pharmacy located close to the Holding Facility - typically for between €1,000 and €2,000 - three to four times a year.<sup>107</sup> The records do not specify what prescription medicines were purchased. While there is not enough information to determine whether this expenditure is, at least theoretically, sufficient for the needs of detainees, both interviews and a 2021 report by the Greek Ombudsman suggest a shortage of medicines.<sup>108</sup>

## 6 - SITE PROFILE: THESSALONIKI GENERAL POLICE DIRECTORATE

Image: Thessaloniki General Police Directorate. April 2025.



The Thessaloniki General Police Directorate (also known as “Megaro”) is located in a large building on Monasteriou street, on the western side of Thessaloniki. According to a CPT report following a visit in 2019,<sup>109</sup> the third floor of the facility is used to accommodate foreign nationals and has a capacity of 72 places. According to procurement documents, the cell area is 500 square metres.<sup>110</sup> The CPT concluded after its last visit that the facility is not suitable for stays of longer than 24 hours, due to the absence of outdoor exercise yards.

### *Overview of interview data:*

We interviewed four people detained at the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate on Monastiriou Street after the last visit of the CPT in 2019.<sup>111</sup> One respondent reported that they were an asylum seeker at the time of their detention, two were undocumented, and one was arrested on criminal charges. Across all interviews, respondents reported being detained for between eight and 46 days.

### **(A) Poor conditions inside police cells**

The CPT delegation reported following its last visit in 2019 that cells were filthy and rubbish was piling up in corridors, and detainees reported bed bugs and lack of hygiene products. Bathrooms were reportedly dilapidated including open drains, broken showers, blocked toilets, filthy floors. Following its visit in 2016 the Committee reported adequate conditions compared to its 2013 visit<sup>112</sup> but emphasised that due to the lack of outdoor access the facility was unsuitable for stays beyond 24 hours.<sup>113</sup>

A testimony of a man detained at the Directorate in 2024 indicates poor conditions in the facility at this time. This man reported that detainees had to sleep on the floor due to there only being one bed in the cell in which he was detained ([927604](#) - 2024). He further reported that detainees had to use whatever they could find to cover themselves during the night, in the absence of blankets provided by the authorities.

A second respondent detained at the facility for 35 days in 2022, reported that the conditions in police holding cells were “not clean at all” ([304605](#) - 2022). The respondent reported that he was provided with a “really old blanket” and a mattress which was infested with bed bugs. He reportedly chose to sleep on the floor because of the bed bugs. He further reported: “You have addicts sleeping next to you, they bring criminals to this place as well.”

### Analysis of contracts:

Calls for tender and contracts state that the cells of the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate are to be cleaned six days a week, with the exception of national holidays.<sup>114</sup> The work is to be performed by one person in four hours. Procurement documents suggest that the Thessaloniki Security Department (Διεύθυνση Ασφάλειας Θεσσαλονίκης, responsible for procurement related to the General Police Directorate cells) bought 200 mattresses in 2022<sup>115</sup> and 180 blankets in 2023.<sup>116</sup> It is however unclear if and how often these are cleaned.



## (B) Allegations of police violence against detainees

The CPT’s follow up report after its 2019 visit included testimonies from three Roma men who were reportedly punched in the head, stomach and rib cage and subjected to kicks and head by two or three of the officers interviewing them at the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate. These men additionally reported verbal abuse, including racist remarks, threats and being subjected to pressure to sign a statement with additional charges, without understanding the contents due to being illiterate.

None of the four individuals we spoke to reported violence in the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate building, although one respondent reported that he was handcuffed very tightly when he arrived at the facility ([675094](#) - 2020). In one case the respondent reported experiencing physical ill-treatment in the form of beatings by uniformed police officers, prior to their arrival at the police station and during transportation in an unmarked police vehicle ([563348](#) - 2021). Another interviewee reported being handcuffed very tightly in the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate.





## **(C) Confiscation of mobile phones**

In one interview, the respondent specified that their phone was confiscated by authorities at the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate and returned to him approximately one month later upon his transfer to Paranesti PRDC. He reported that he needed to get access to his phone to check the rejection decision that he received on his asylum claim, but this was not possible (927604 - 2024). No explanation was reportedly given as to why he could not get access to his phone. Consequently, the respondent was only able to communicate through the landline of the facility and he needed to pay for a phone card in order to use it.

# ◆ CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report highlights the persistence of a punitive and unlawful practice: the use of police stations in Greece as sites of immigration detention. Drawing on qualitative interviews, legal analysis, and administrative documents, we expose the persistent practice of detaining migrants in police cells in breach of the law, revealing the appalling conditions as well as the limited access to rights for people who are incarcerated in such facilities. Based on the findings of this report, we make the following recommendations:

## **To monitoring bodies and oversight mechanisms:**

We encourage relevant monitoring bodies including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) to consider conducting follow-up visits to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility and the Thessaloniki General Police Directorate on Monastiriou Street. The findings of this report point to ongoing concerns that warrant renewed attention and underscore the importance of continued independent oversight.

## **To the Greek authorities:**

We call for the immediate and definitive end to the use of police stations for immigration detention purposes or prolonged detention of any kind - a commitment that successive Greek governments have made but have consistently failed to realise. All people facing deportation should be moved as quickly as possible to a facility which guarantees them access to basic rights and dignified conditions, in line with the law.

Where police stations continue to be used for prolonged detention in violation of the law, we reiterate recommendations issued by the CPT in previous monitoring reports<sup>117</sup>:

- Ensure the basic needs of detained persons are met - including adequate food, drinking water, personal hygiene and cleaning products, and medication.
- Establish and enforce independent complaint mechanisms and ensure that allegations of ill-treatment by police are investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially.
- Guarantee access to a clean mattress and bedding, and ensure all detention areas are regularly disinfected and maintained in sanitary condition.
- Carry out medical screening of detained people on arrival and ensure that a doctor and nurse are present at any facility where people are held for prolonged periods of time.
- Cease the practice of confiscating detainees' mobile phones which obstructs their right to contact families, organisations and legal representatives.
- Increase the daily allowance for detained persons to ensure they can access sufficient food, water, and basic items.
- Provide all detainees with information in a language they understand regarding their legal situation, including access to legal counsel and interpretation services.
- Ensure access to professional interpretation, including for the translation of any documents detainees are required to sign.
- Guarantee that all detainees are allowed at least one hour of outdoor exercise per day, without exception.

# ENDNOTES

1. In this report we use the term police departments to refer to facilities designed for short term detention, including police stations, border guard stations and transfer centres, in contrast to PRDCs, which function as official immigration detention facilities designed for longer-term detention.
2. See European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>
3. See CPT. 2019. Report to the Greek Government on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 28 March to 9 April 2019. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20190328-en-26>
4. The Didymoteicho Border Guard Department is located in the village of Isaakio, near Didymoteicho.
5. Based on information provided by the interviewee and official documentation, the Promachonas Border Guard Department is likely to be approximately at this location: [https://www.google.ch/maps/place/41%C2%B022'17.3%22N+23%C2%B021'39.8%22E/@41.3715229,23.3602051,19.02z/data=!4m4!3m3!8m2!3d41.3714778!4d23.36105?hl=fr&entry=ttu&\\_ep=EgoyMDI1MDMyNS4xIKXMDSoJLDEwMjExNDU1SAFQAw%3D%3D](https://www.google.ch/maps/place/41%C2%B022'17.3%22N+23%C2%B021'39.8%22E/@41.3715229,23.3602051,19.02z/data=!4m4!3m3!8m2!3d41.3714778!4d23.36105?hl=fr&entry=ttu&_ep=EgoyMDI1MDMyNS4xIKXMDSoJLDEwMjExNDU1SAFQAw%3D%3D)
6. Whilst the interview respondent referred to a police station in Neapoli, a neighbourhood in Thessaloniki, there are no police departments situated there. It is likely the police station referred to is Neapoli-Sykies Police Department, located in the nearby area of Sykies.
7. Interview respondents did not consent to the disclosure and processing of their personal data and were informed that the interviews were conducted in a strictly confidential manner. Therefore we did not store personal data of interview respondents after completing transcripts of interviews. Transcripts are kept on file but do not contain any details which could reveal the identity of respondents.
8. In just under half of interviews, respondents reported being detained in two different police stations. Typically, respondents were apprehended and initially detained for a short period of time in the nearest police facility, then transferred to a larger police station (for instance the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, or the police headquarters in Athens or Thessaloniki).
9. Summaries of these interviews are available on the open-access platform [Detention Landscapes](#). The analysis in this report draws on the original transcripts of interviews, which in some cases contain more information than the published summaries.
10. Official documents such as calls for tender and contracts were sourced from the website of the Hellenic Police, the administrative database [Diavgeia](#) and contracts database [Prometheus](#). One limitation of the Diavgeia database is the complexity and difficulty of performing searches to locate relevant documents. We addressed this by performing multiple searches using variations of keywords.
11. See Ministerial Decision 305652/2024, Gov. Gazette B 7117/27.12.2024. Available here: <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/1098572/yp.-apofasi-305652-2024>
12. See Oxfam and GCR. 2021. Detention as the default - How Greece, with the support of the EU, is generalizing administrative detention of migrants. Available here: <https://reliefweb.int/report/greece/detention-default-how-greece-support-eu-generalizing-administrative-detention-migrants>
13. See Ministerial Decision 4000/4/46-α/2009 (ΦΕΚ 1535/B/27-7-2009), Article 5(2): “Foreign nationals subject to an administrative deportation order shall be held in Special Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals (Article 81 of Law 3386/2005). In cases where such facilities are unavailable, they may be temporarily detained in police holding facilities”.
14. There is no other legal provision stipulating the maximum time period for detention in police stations.
15. See Greek Penitentiary Code and Circular 10/10/2005 of the Ministry of Public Order.
16. See Article 16 of the EU Directive 2008/115/EC and Article 31 of Hellenic Law 3907/2011.
17. See Article 51 of Hellenic Law 4939/2022.
18. For example see ECtHR cases of: *Kaja v. Greece*, Application no. 32927/03, 27 July 2006; *Shuvaev v. Greece*, Application no. 8249/07, 29 October 2009; *Tousios v. Greece*, Application no. 36296/19, 10 February 2022.
19. See F. Kourakis. 2024. Immigration Detention in Police Stations in Greece: A Persistent and Cruel Practice. Available here: <https://blogs.law.ox.ac.uk/border-criminologies-blog/blog-post/2024/02/immigration-detention-police-stations-greece-persistent>
20. See CPT. 2024. Report to the Greek Government on the visit to Greece carried out by the CPT from 20 November to 1 December 2023, 12 July 2024. Available here: <https://rm.coe.int/1680b0e4e1>
21. See Greek Ombudsman. 2019. National Preventive Mechanism Against Torture And Ill-Treatment, Annual Special Report. Available here: [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/OPCAT/NPM/NPM2019\\_Greece.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/OPCAT/NPM/NPM2019_Greece.pdf)
22. See analyses of ECtHR cases condemning Greece for inhuman and degrading treatment in police stations [here](#) and [here](#).

23. A letter sent from the Greek Government to the CPT in 2009 promising the phasing out of police stations detention was mentioned in a public statement of the CPT published in 2011, available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-2011decl-en-1>

24. See Council of Europe. 2024. 1507th meeting (September 2024) (DH) - Action Plan (20/08/2024) - Communication from Greece concerning the group of cases of M.S.S. v. Greece (Applications No. 30696/09, 4892/18) (anglais uniquement). Available here: [https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng?i=DH-DD\(2024\)934E](https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng?i=DH-DD(2024)934E)

25. CPT delegations in 2005 found the existing registers “superficial and on occasion incomplete or inexact” (CPT, 2006, p. 25). In some stations, staff were not even aware of the exact number of persons detained or even outrightly lied about a centre’s capacity. For example, the CPT delegation was informed that a certain border guard station was closed but when visited, it contained more than 100 people and according to them it had been operating for quite some time. Available here: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806965e7>. See also the reports from 2008, available here: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806965ea> and 2010, available here: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806965ee>.

26. See Pillant Laurence. 2015. Operation “Xenios Zeus”: A strategy for deterring immigration through detention, intimidation and violation of migrants’ rights. Available here: <https://www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/operation-xenios-zeus/>

27. See Human Rights Watch. 2013. Unwelcome Guests: Greek Police Abuses of Migrants in Athens. Available here: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/06/12/unwelcome-guests/greek-police-abuses-migrants-athens>

28. See Andriani Fili. 2023. Documenting Immigration Detention in Greece: A Continuum of Extreme Violence and Complicity. (PhD thesis, Lancaster University, 2023). Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/openview/dfc65529a813f725b4f9531e4e91ccfc/1?cbl=2026366&diss=y&pq-origsite=gscholar>

29. Statistics from the Greek Government regarding the annual numbers in detention in police stations are published by [Refugee Support Aegean](#) and in annual [AIDA reports](#).

30. The available data shows that in recent years the numbers of people with an irregular migrant status detained in police stations has been far lower than those in pre-removal detention, which has averaged around 2,500 at the end of each year. This contrasts with the situation in 2015 when the CPT [reported](#) that 988 people were held in pre-removal centres and an additional 2,000 in police stations and special holding facilities.

31. In Greece, the practice of placing unaccompanied migrant children in so-called “protective custody” has raised significant human rights concerns. Intended as a temporary measure to safeguard vulnerable minors until appropriate accommodation was found, protective custody often resulted in prolonged detention in police station cells or other unsuitable facilities. Despite its abolition in 2020, children continue to be detained in police stations, or *de facto* detained in other facilities. A recent investigation by We Are Solomon reveals that in some so-called “model” camps, unaccompanied children are forced to sleep on the floor in shifts, highlighting the ongoing failure of the Greek state to provide safe, humane accommodation for those in its care. See here: <https://wearesolomon.com/mag/focus-area/migration/unaccompanied-children-sleep-on-the-floor-in-shifts-in-greece-model-camps/>

32. See Human Rights Watch. 2020. Greece Commits to End “Protective” Child Detention. Available here: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/11/19/greece-commits-end-protective-child-detention>

33. See AIDA. 2018. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/report-download\\_aida\\_gr\\_2018update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/report-download_aida_gr_2018update.pdf)

34. See AIDA. 2019. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report-download\\_aida\\_gr\\_2019update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report-download_aida_gr_2019update.pdf)

35. See AIDA. 2020. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/AIDA-GR\\_2020update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/AIDA-GR_2020update.pdf)

36. See AIDA. 2022. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/AIDA-GR\\_2021update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/AIDA-GR_2021update.pdf)

37. See AIDA. 2023. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AIDA-GR\\_2022-Update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AIDA-GR_2022-Update.pdf)

38. See AIDA. 2024. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/AIDA-GR\\_2023-Update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/AIDA-GR_2023-Update.pdf)

39. See RSA. 2024. Immigration detention in the first half of 2024. Available here: <https://rsaagean.org/en/immigration-detention-greece-first-half-2024/>

40. For instance, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe requested specific data on the average length of detention in police stations in September 2023, however the Greek government failed to provide this information in its Action Plan submitted to the Committee in August 2024. This lack of transparency is not an isolated issue: investigative reports have shown that Greek police systematically refuse to disclose key information about detention practices, including deaths in custody, further reinforcing concerns about accountability and oversight. See here: [https://www.europeandatajournalism.eu/cp\\_data\\_news/deaths-in-police-custody-greeces-police-is-hiding-the-facts/](https://www.europeandatajournalism.eu/cp_data_news/deaths-in-police-custody-greeces-police-is-hiding-the-facts/)



41. See Greek Ombudsman. 2020. Return of Third Country Nationals Special Report. Available here: [https://old.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ekthesi\\_epistrofes-2020\\_english\\_site.pdf](https://old.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ekthesi_epistrofes-2020_english_site.pdf)
42. See Greek Ombudsman. 2021. Return of Third Country Nationals Special Report. Available here: [https://old.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ethsia-ekthesi\\_2021\\_eng.pdf](https://old.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ethsia-ekthesi_2021_eng.pdf)
43. See Dimitris Angelidis/Efsyn. 2025. Dramatic cuts in UNHCR due to suspension of USAID [in Greek]. Available here: [https://www.efsyn.gr/ellada/dikaiomata/461195\\_dramatikes-perikopes-stin-unhcr-logo-anastolis-tis-amerikanikis-boitheias#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.efsyn.gr/ellada/dikaiomata/461195_dramatikes-perikopes-stin-unhcr-logo-anastolis-tis-amerikanikis-boitheias#goog_rewarded)
44. Conversations with actors including UNHCR indicate that there are no other actors regularly undertaking monitoring visits to police stations in Greece. The Greek Council for Refugees was visiting police facilities on an ad hoc basis in the context of its legal work up until 2023, when this part of its work was unfortunately reduced due to funding cuts. ICRC monitored conditions in nine police stations during the years 2016-18 but after this was primarily focused on monitoring conditions in PRDCs until it ceased operations in Greece in 2024.
45. See National Preventive Mechanism reports published prior to 2021 here: <https://old.synigoros.gr/?i=human-rights.en.hr-special> and after 2021 here: <https://www.synigoros.gr/el/category/eidikes-ek8eseis>
46. See Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. 2023. Domestic implementation of European Court of Human Rights' judgments related to immigration in Greece. Available here: <https://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Policy-brief-127-Anagnostou-final-EN-1.pdf>
47. See Case of *Dougoz v. Greece* (Application no. 40907/98). Available here: <https://www.refworld.org/jurisprudence/caselaw/echr/2001/en/17854>
48. See case of *Kaja v Greece* (Application no 32927/03). Available here: [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:\[%22002-3207%22\]}](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:[%22002-3207%22]})
49. See case of *Tabesh v. Greece* (Application no. 8256/07). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-tabesh-v-greece-application-no-825607-26-november-2009>
50. See case of *Khuroshvili v. Greece* (Application No. 58165/10). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-decision-khuroshvili-v-greece-application-no-5816510-articles-3-and-5-12-december-2013>
51. See case of *Tatishvili v. Greece* (Application No. 26452/11). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-tatishvili-v-greece-application-no-2645211>
52. See cases of *De los Santos and de la Cruz v. Greece* (Applications Nos. 2134/12 and 2161/12). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-de-los-santos-and-de-la-cruz-v-greece-applications-nos-213412-and-216112>
53. See case of *S.Z. v. Greece* (Application no. 66702/13). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-sz-v-greece-application-no-6670213-21-june-2018>
54. See overview of the CPT and Greece here: <https://www.coe.int/el/web/cpt/greece>
55. See Greek National Commission for Human Rights. 2024. Declaration of the GNCHR: Conditions of detention in police stations - Protection of the right to life. Available here: <https://www.nchr.gr/ta-nea-mas/1848-dilosi-tis-eeda-synthikes-kratisis-se-astynomika-tmimata-prostasia-tou-dikaiomatos-sti-zoi.html>
56. See Reuters. 2024. Greece investigates death of detained Pakistani migrant. Available here: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/greece-investigates-death-detained-pakistani-migrant-2024-09-27/>
57. See Reuters. 2024. Greece investigates death of detained Pakistani migrant. Available here: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/greece-investigates-death-detained-pakistani-migrant-2024-09-27/>
58. See Hellenic League for Human Rights. Police Brutality and Fundamental Rights: An overview of police arbitrariness in Greece. Available here: [https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB\\_ENG\\_e-book\\_F.pdf](https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB_ENG_e-book_F.pdf)
59. See European Data Journalist Network. Deaths in police custody: Greece's police is hiding the facts. Available here: [https://www.europeandatajournalism.eu/cp\\_data\\_news/deaths-in-police-custody-greeces-police-is-hiding-the-facts/](https://www.europeandatajournalism.eu/cp_data_news/deaths-in-police-custody-greeces-police-is-hiding-the-facts/)
60. See the case of *Sarwari and others v Greece* (Application no 38089/12). Available here: <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/sarwari-and-others-v-greece-greek-police-behaviour-and-subsequent-investigation-violated#:~:text=The%20case%20concerned%20the%20actions,question%20and%20physically%20abuse%20them.> See also: [https://omadadikigorwn.blogspot.com/2012/03/blog-post\\_27.html](https://omadadikigorwn.blogspot.com/2012/03/blog-post_27.html)
61. See CPT. 2008. Report to the Government of Greece on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 20 to 27 February 2007. Available here: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806965ea>
62. See CPT. 2024. Report to the Greek Government on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 20 November to 1 December 2023. Available here: <https://rm.coe.int/1680b0e4e1>
63. See Greek National Commission for Human Rights. 2024. Declaration of the GNCHR: Conditions of detention in police stations - Protection of the right to life. Available here: <https://www.nchr.gr/ta-nea-mas/1848-dilosi-tis-eeda-synthikes-kratisis-se-astynomika-tmimata-prostasia-tou-dikaiomatos-sti-zoi.html>



64. See Case of *Galotskin v. Greece* (Application no. 2945/07). Available here: <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=001-96687&filename=001-96687.pdf>. See also the case of *Zontul v. Greece*. Available here: <https://redress.org/casework/necati-zontul-v-greece/>
65. See N. Sitaropoulos. 2017. Migrant Ill-Treatment in Greek Law Enforcement - Are the Strasbourg Court Judgments the Tip of the Iceberg? Available here: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2921109>
66. See, for example, CPT. 2014. Report to the Greek Government on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 4 to 16 April 2013. Available here: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680696620>; Hellenic League for Human Rights. 2024. Police Brutality and Fundamental Rights: An Overview of Police Arbitrariness in Greece. Available here: [https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB\\_ENG\\_e-book\\_F.pdf](https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB_ENG_e-book_F.pdf); National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents (EMIDIPA). 2024. Annual Report 2023. Available here: <https://www.synigoros.gr/el/category/ekdoseis-ek8eseis/post/emhdipa-or-ethsia-ek8esh-2023>
67. See Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. 2024. 17th Annual report 2023: Supervision of the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. Available here: <https://edoc.coe.int/en/european-convention-on-human-rights/11835-supervision-of-the-execution-of-judgments-of-the-european-court-of-human-rights-2023-17th-annual-report-of-the-committee-of-ministers.html>
68. See EMIDIPA. 2023. Annual Report. Available here: <https://govwatch.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/EMHDIPA-2023-1.pdf>
69. See CPT. 2020. Report to the Greek Government on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 28 March to 9 April 2019. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20190328-en-26>
70. See Hellenic League for Human Rights. 2024. Police Brutality and Fundamental Rights: An Overview of Police Arbitrariness in Greece. Available here: [https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB\\_ENG\\_e-book\\_F.pdf](https://www.hlhr.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PB_ENG_e-book_F.pdf)
71. It is likely this refers to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, however we were unable to confirm this based on the survey response.
72. This may refer to the Kordelio Police Department or Thessaloniki Immigration Management Department in Kordelio. We were unable to determine based on the survey response which specific facility was referred to.
73. See Article 31 of Hellenic Law 3907/2011.
74. See Greek Ombudsman/National Preventive Mechanism Against Torture and Ill-Treatment. 2024. OPCAT: Annual Special Report, 2022-2023. Available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/spt-opcat/npm/NPM-Greece-2022-2023.pdf>
75. This facility was described as “a small building in a small village close to the border”. It is likely to be the Didymoteicho Border Guard Department.
76. See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>
77. See AIDA. 2023. Country Report: Greece. Available here: [https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AIDA-GR\\_2022-Update.pdf](https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AIDA-GR_2022-Update.pdf)
78. Similar observations regarding the excessive use of force by police when apprehending foreign national detainees and Roma communities was noted by the CPT following its visit to several police stations in Thessaloniki and Athens in 2019, available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20190328-en-26>
79. See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>
80. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2022. Decision on Multi-Year Commitment for the Fiscal Years 2023 – 2034, in the Detailed Expenditure Account (A.A.E.) 2440101001. “Lease Contracts for Buildings (excluding leasing),” of the Expenditure Budget of Special Fund 1057-201-0900200 “Thessaloniki Police Directorate”. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/9%CE%92%CE%94%CE%A346%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%98%CE%976>
81. See Greek Ombudsman. 2017. National Preventive Mechanism Against Torture & Ill-Treatment - Annual Special Report OPCAT 2017. Available here: <https://old.synigoros.gr/?i=human-rights.el.files.538206>
82. See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>
83. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Invitation to Submit an Offer for the Provision of Cleaning Services for the Building Facilities of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΟ) for the Years 2024-2025, Through the Direct Assignment Process. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A852%CE%A846%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%9636;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Contract for the Provision of Cleaning Services for the Building Facilities of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΟ) for the Year 2024. Diavgeia. Available here:

<https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/9%CE%9D%CE%9E%CE%9D46%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A82%CE%97>

84. See Greek Ombudsman. 2020. Return of Third Country Nationals Special Report. Available here: <https://old.synigoros.gr/?i=human-rights.en.recentinterventions.821099>

85. See Greek Ombudsman. 2020. Return of Third Country Nationals Special Report. Available here: <https://old.synigoros.gr/?i=human-rights.en.recentinterventions.821099>

86. Since 2023, the Thessaloniki Land Registry Service (Κτηματική Υπηρεσία Θεσσαλονίκης) has issued repeated calls (available [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) for leasing a new building to house both the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility and the Transfers Sub-Directorate which are both currently located in the Metagagon facility in Menemeni. There is no evidence that such a property has been found to date.

87. As noted by the CPT in the report following its visit in 2016 to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>

88. At the end of its 2016 visit to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility, the CPT delegation made an immediate observation requesting the Greek authorities to ensure that every detained person at this facility is provided with a clean mattress and bedding, that all cells are disinfested, and that, for public health reasons, medical screening is carried out upon admission and a doctor and a nurse are present several hours each day. It also requested that immediate steps be taken to address the indifferent attitude of staff towards detainees by putting in place a new robust management of the facility.

89. This observation was made by the Greek Ombudsman following its visit to the Thessaloniki Special Holding Facility in November and December 2022. In a 2020 report, the Ombudsman highlighted that the Special Holding Facility was used as a *de facto* pre-removal detention centre, but without meeting specifications for access to yard time as laid out in the operating regulation for pre-removal centres, Government Gazette 118/B/21-1-2015.

90. Respondents were detained in 2020 (1), 2021 (1), 2022 (2), 2023 (2), and 2024 (3).

91. See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>

92. This observation was also noted in the CPT's report following its 2016 visit to the facility: "Cells were not equipped with beds, plinths or any chairs and detainees were forced to spend all day lying on filthy, infested mattresses on the floor while the blankets provided were also dirty, worn and flea-infested". See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>

93. An administrative document concerning the purchase of 200 blankets by the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate in 2020 cites as a reason the destruction of blankets because of "tuberculosis outbreaks, lice and other transmittable diseases". In 2021, the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate purchased new foam mattresses and bedding, citing the Covid-19 pandemic in its reasoning (see [here](#) and [here](#)). Another 150 appear to have been bought in 2023, however testimonies from people detained in the Special Holding Facility in the same year continue to report the presence of bed bugs. Another administrative document issued in 2024 records an order for washing 600 blankets of the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate. We were unable to locate similar orders for previous years, although one document suggests that the Directorate bought two washing machines and two tumble driers in 2021.

94. In 2020, the Thessaloniki Aliens Directorate purchased 10 air conditioning and heating units as "five out of the ten cells [presumably at the Special Holding Facility] did not have any heating." The Directorate obtained 12 air conditioning units in 2021 but it is not known whether any of these were installed in detention areas. Interviews conducted in 2023 and 2024 indicate that insufficient heating remained an issue during these years, despite these purchases.

95. See CPT. 2017. Report to the Greek Government on the visits to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 13 to 18 April and 19 to 25 July 2016. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20160413-en-23>

96. Interview with legal CSO practitioner, March 2025.

97. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Contract for the provision of cleaning services for the building facilities of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΟ) for the year 2024. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/9%CE%9D%CE%9E%CE%9D46%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A82%CE%97>;

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2021. Contract for the provision of cleaning services for the building facilities under the responsibility of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΟ) for the year 2022, with a special clause granting the option to extend the contract for the year 2023. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A9%CE%9A%CE%93646%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-062>;

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2020. Service contract for cleaning services of the building facilities under the responsibility of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΟ), to cover non-negotiable needs for the year 2021. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/65%CE%9D%CE%A146%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%95%CE%98%CE%A6>

98. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2020. Contract for the payment of specialized disinfection and pest control services to prevent coronavirus outbreaks in the detention facilities of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΘ). Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A9%CE%A5%CE%94%CE%9446%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%98%CE%9D%CE%9C;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2021. Contract for the payment of disinfection and pest control services in premises and detention areas of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΘ). Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/67%CE%91%CE%9D46%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%9764;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2022. Contract for the payment of disinfection and pest control of offices, common areas, and detention spaces of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΘ) for the year 2022. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/6%CE%A0%CE%99%CE%9A46%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A93%CE%A7;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Contract for the payment of disinfection and pest control services for the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens (ΔΑΛΛΘ) for the year 2023. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A8%CE%9B6%CE%9246%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A6%CE%9E%CE%9F;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2024. Contract for the payment of disinfection – pest control – rodent extermination services in offices, common areas, and detention facilities of the Services of the Thessaloniki Directorate for Aliens for the year 2024. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/6%CE%93%CE%99%CE%9946%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-8%CE%A9%CE%A4;>

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99. See Greek Ombudsman. 2005. Report on Monitoring Visit to the Detention Cells of the Police Departments of Nea Ionia, Volos and Almyros. Available here: <https://old.synigoros.gr/resources/autopsiamagnisias.pdf>;

Hellenic Parliament. 2013. Detention Conditions in the Cells of the Ioannina Police Directorate. Related Issues. Available here: <https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/UserFiles/67715b2c-ec81-4f0c-ad6a-476a34d732bd/8046075.pdf>;

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2016. Approval of expenditure for the nourishment of individuals legally residing in the country, detained at the Police Detention Facilities of Zakynthos Police Department, for the month of June 2016. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/7%CE%A37%CE%98465%CE%A6%CE%98%CE%95-%CE%98%CE%A92>

100. See CPT. 2010. Report to the Government of Greece on the visit to Greece carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 17 to 29 September 2009. Available here: <https://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/eng?i=p-grc-20090917-en-3;>

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101. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2019. Invitation to submit offers for the informal tender for selecting a contractor for the supply of food for the detainees of the Foreign Affairs Directorate of Thessaloniki. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A89%CE%9D246%CE%9C%CE%9A6%CE%A0-%CE%93%CE%984;>

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Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Invitation to submit an offer for the supply of food for the detainees of the Detention Facilities Guard Office of the Foreign Affairs Directorate of Thessaloniki. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A86%CE%97%CE%A346%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A7%CE%A8%CE%A9;>

Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2019. Invitation to submit offers for the informal tender for the selection of a contractor for the supply of food for the detainees of the Foreign Affairs Directorate of Thessaloniki. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/%CE%A89%CE%9D246%CE%9C%CE%9A6%CE%A0-%CE%93%CE%984;>

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102. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Contract for the supply of food for the detainees of the Detention Facilities Guard Office of the Foreign Affairs Directorate of Thessaloniki. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/68%CE%99%CE%A146%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-%CE%A0%CE%974>

103. See Greek National Commission for Human Rights. 2010. Detention conditions in police detention centres and premises detention facilities for aliens. Available here:

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104. See CPT. 2024. Council of Europe's anti-torture Committee again calls on Greece to reform its immigration detention system and stop pushbacks Available here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cpt/-/council-of-europe-anti-torture-committee-cpt-again-calls-on-greece-to-reform-its-immigration-detention-system-and-stop-pushbacks>;

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111. Respondents were detained in 2020 (1), 2021 (1), 2022 (1) and 2024 (1).

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114. See Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection. 2023. Award of results of Direct Procurement, based on invitation no. 8045/22/1023-ιγ', for the selection of the lowest bidder, concerning the procurement from the open market of acrylic blankets, to cover non-deferrable needs of the detention facilities of the Thessaloniki Security Directorate. Diavgeia. Available here: <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/decision/view/960%CE%A146%CE%9C%CE%A4%CE%9B%CE%92-0%CE%9D%CE%A9;>

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