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CARITAS ATHENS AND ITS WORK

Caritas Athens, the recognized charitable organization of the **Catholic Church**, was established in 1978 to fight poverty and injustice and to support every person in need, regardless of nationality, race, language, religion, age or gender.

Caritas Athens belongs to the network of the national organization **Caritas Hellas** which is a member of **Caritas Europa** and **Caritas Internationalis**, active in 165 countries in the world.

For 43 years, it has been operating in the center of Athens guided by Christian principles and the values of love, solidarity, social responsibility, sensitivity, respect for dignity, and guaranteed human rights.

Its work requires a wide range of activities, which are implemented by a network of **64** employees and **150** volunteers and the support of donors such as **Caritas Internationalis**, the **Italian Bishops' Conference (Conferenza Episcopale Italiana)**, **CRS (Catholic Relief Services)** and **Caritas Italiana**, as well as partners such as the **UNHCR** and **IOM**, the **Ministry of Immigration & Asylum**,

Since the beginning of the refugee crisis in Greece (August 2015), Caritas Athens has expanded its activities based on solidarity, the provision of basic needs and the process of social integration of refugees. Up to October 2021 it has served more than **1,000,000** people through various actions:

- Accommodation (**ESTIA I & II** programs)
- Food distribution (daily soup kitchen)
- Full support for recognized refugees to find accommodation and work for their self-sufficiency (**Helios** program)
- Financial support (**Prepaid Cards** program)

-Events for social inclusion and job placement of recognized refugees (**Livelihood** program)

-Facilitation of integration of children, aged 5-16 years, of families seeking asylum, into Greek society (**Children's Social Inclusion Program**)

-Provision of food and basic necessities

-Psychosocial support

-Consultations

-Educational & recreational activities for children and adults (Greek and English lessons, refugee library)

More specifically:

Service	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Until 10/2021	Total
Meals	48.165	101.130	117.767	116.692	95.783	46.511	34.137	560.185
Clothing	4.556	7.985	7.773	6.522	6.395	962	884	34.077
Showers	118	8.173	6.942	5.075	5.070	-	-	25.378
Social Service	6.480	11.563	9.822	4.945	4.488	784	1.353	39.435
Greek & English Classes	145	45	40	30	30	30	75	395
Diapers & Milk	1.200	808	975	737	800	400	577	5.497
Super Market Vouchers	1.200	1.800	1.800	1.800	1.200	1.800	434	10.034
Child-friendly play space	-	1.262	1.091	224	384	-	-	2961
								677.962

SHELTER FOR REFUGEES / "ESTIA" PROGRAM

-More than **5,600** asylum seekers, from Egypt, Algeria, Afghanistan, Georgia, Ghana, Eritrea, India, Iraq, Iran, the Republic of the Congo, Kuwait, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Nepal, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, referred by the **UNHCR**, have been hosted in the Urban Accommodation program of **Caritas Athens**, from July 2016 through October 2021.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE / PREPAID CARDS PROGRAM

-More than **32,000** refugees, beneficiaries of financial assistance who live either in Shelters or in autonomous places of residence throughout Attica, have been served monthly, from January 2017 through September 2021.

SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENT LIVING / “HELIOS” PROGRAM

-Caritas Athens has served more than 4,500 recognized refugees from July 2019 through October 2021 in the implementation of the program, with 33.298 enrollments throughout Greece (32.06% ESTIA, 36.11% SITES, 14.56% IOM HOTELS, 17.27% RIC) for learning Greek, assistance in vocational rehabilitation and finding accommodation, with a rent subsidy for the first months.

WORK / “LIVELIHOOD” PROGRAM

-More than **500** people have found work (permanent or temporary), with the goal of social inclusion and financial autonomy.

INTEGRATION PROCESS / CHILD SOCIAL INTEGRATION PROGRAM

-More than 100 children, aged 5-16, from families seeking asylum who are supported by ESTIA II program, have been taught Greek since August 2021 and participate in various activities, alone or with their parents, enhancing their psychosocial development.

EDUCATION

-More than **1,390** hosted children enrolled in school from 2017 to 2021.

-**247** hosted adults have attended Greek lessons.

DISTRIBUTION OF CLOTHING

Twice a week clothing is distributed to all ages.

More than **3,000** refugees, who passed through Athens (from the end of 2015 until the beginning of 2016) with the prospect of settling in another EU country, received new clothing.

LIVELIHOOD / SOCIAL INCLUSION

-Through the "Livelihood & Social Inclusion" Program, **4,866** events were organized in which **18,052** people participated.

-At the same time, **Caritas Athens** supports Greeks, as well as immigrants who have lived in the country for many years, who have material and psychological needs, especially after the economic crisis.

In collaboration with the Help Center, at 52 Kapodistriou Street, **Caritas Athens** created and supports **Listening Centers** in collaboration with the various **Parish Caritas** of the **Catholic Archdiocese of Athens**, covering needs such as:

-Training of volunteers for the staffing of these centers

-Work counseling (at individual & group level)

-Psychosocial support

-Financial support through specific programs

-Distribution of food, clothing, and essentials

EMERGENCY PROGRAM OF ILIA PREFECTURE

Support for the residents of Kladeos, Lasdika, Pothos, Mageira, Helidoni, Pelopi, Pefkon, Nemouta, Xirokampos and Pournari communities of the prefecture of Ilia, which were affected by the catastrophic fires in the summer of 2021, with the supply of food, water, olive oil, necessities and personal hygiene items, clothing, and school supplies.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE / "INSIEME" (TOGETHER) PROGRAM

Support to 36 families of Greeks and immigrants through the payment of utility bills, as well as the purchase and distribution of food items for Caritas Athens' kitchen soup.

OTHER SECTORS OF ACTION

Caritas Athens is also active through the **11 parish Caritas** of the Catholic Ecclesiastical Province of the capital in the following sectors:

BLOOD DONATION

In cooperation with the **National Center for Voluntary Blood Donation (EKEA)** and **public hospitals**, Caritas often organizes blood donations to collect this priceless gift of life. Since it was first launched in 1978, it has collected **5,800** blood units so far, helping more than **3,000** people.

ELDERLY PEOPLE

Entertainment and joy are offered to the elderly people by paying visits to retirement homes and by organizing events, dinners, excursions, watching cultural events and other initiatives.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In natural disasters and serious emergencies, mobilization and coordinated assistance is immediate, in cooperation with the state or local authorities.

SUPPORT FOR THE SICK AND PEOPLE WITH HEALTH ISSUES

Volunteers visit the sick and people suffering from serious health issues, either in hospital or at home, with the aim to support them morally, psychologically and financially, whenever possible.

SUPPORT FOR THE PRISONERS

Volunteers visit incarcerated people upon receiving authorization, providing them with moral, psychological, and basic material support.

SUPPORT FOR THE HOMELESS

The “**Homeless Team**”, consisting of volunteers, assists our fellow humans living on the street (specifically in the broader areas of Syntagma and Omonia Squares), offering food, clothes, and basic necessities.

VOLUNTEERING

With a view to promoting and enhancing volunteering, Caritas Athens organizes seminars, lectures, and events in order to provide training for volunteers in an effort to optimize their performance and contribution.

EVENTS ORGANIZATION - PROMOTION OF CARITAS ATHENS' WORK

To promote and enhance humanitarian work in society, as well as to support its actions, Public Relations department of Caritas Athens organizes a range of events (seminars, parties for children and seniors, visits to cultural site, trips, etc.). In addition, it also participates in workshops, congresses and other events of related interest both in Greece and abroad.

PUBLICATION OF CARITAS ATHENS' MAGAZINE AND CALENDAR

Activities, events and thoughts relative to the purpose of the organization are recorded in the **CARITAS ATHENS** magazine which is published in both Greek and English and is distributed free of charge. Every year a calendar with photos of Caritas activities is also published.



