

Greece Registers 22,500 Asylum Seekers This Week



Athens, September 11 (RHC)-- At least 22,500 asylum seekers have been registered in the Greek island of Lesbos since the beginning of the week, the country's police officials say. The officials said on Thursday that the figure represents refugees who have been registered since Monday evening.

Earlier this week, authorities opened an emergency registration center on the island to clear a huge backlog of refugees as officials struggled to keep up with the pace of arrivals.

Lesbos, like several other Greek islands, has been struggling with an influx of asylum seekers, many of them Syrian refugees. Many refugees upon arrival in Greece were stuck on Lesbos island without their papers for days or even weeks. This made it impossible for refugees to catch a ferry to the Greek mainland and travel on to other destinations in Europe.

Thousands of refugees were forced to camp on the streets, while there were a number of clashes as riot police struggled to control huge crowds pressing forward to get aboard ferries. Police in Lesbos said they had registered almost all of the refugees waiting for legal documentation by Wednesday night.

However, rubber inflatable boats carrying 40 to 60 people continue to arrive at a regular pace along the island's northern coast.

An estimated 340,000 asylum seekers have so far arrived in Europe most braving dangerous sea journeys from North Africa and Turkey, according to reports.

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