

Q&A: Access to Education

Information for field staff and refugee parents

The following Q&A was produced in accordance with information from the Ministry of Education, Research, and Religious Affairs' plan so to ensure better communication with refugee parents and children staying in Greece.

Accessing in public schools in Greece does not oblige refugees to stay in Greece. Education for refugee children is available while they stay in Greece and is beneficial to them, as it provides some stability and normalcy. In addition, documentation of attendance will be provided upon departure from Greece.

Who is eligible?

All children have the right to access school education in Greece, without distinction. The unique condition for children to attend school is to be vaccinated, which lies under the responsibility of the Greek Ministry of Health.

The first stage of the Ministry's programme is focusing on providing access to children between 4-15 years old, who are of compulsory school age — kindergarten (nipiagogeio) to junior high school (gymnasio).

The Ministry's plan primarily targets the estimated 18,000 refugee and migrant children of compulsory school age (1.4% of the total student population in Greece). In order to accommodate all the refugee children in the Greek school system, two options have been proposed by the Ministry. The first is for children living in open temporary sites, the second is for children living in dispersed areas in urban settings such as relocation accommodation, squats, apartments, hotels, and reception centres for asylum seekers and UAMs.

Children living in open temporary sites

Children between 4-5¹ years old will be eligible to attend additional kindergarten facilities, which will be established within the open temporary sites.

Children aged between 6-15² years will be enrolled in afternoon reception classes from 14:00 to 18:00, in neighbouring public schools identified by the Ministry. They will be taught Greek as a second language, English language, mathematics, sports, arts and computer science.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) will ensure the transportation of the refugee children from the open temporary sites to the selected schools with buses equipped with IOM escorts.

¹ According to the Greek school system and the new Ministerial decision

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