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.

Overall, it is among the Ministry of Education's responsibilities to facilitate the school enrolment of refugee children, even in absence of the required documentation (please see: *http://www.minedu.gov.gr/eidiseis/22034-04-07-16-gia-tin-eggrafi-allodapon-mathiton-me-ellipi-dikaiologitika-stin-defterovathmia-ekpaidefsi*).

Parents who do not have all the required documentation should still enroll their children in schools and they will be supported by the Ministry of Education in those efforts.

In order for refugee children to be placed in schools that are running reception classes in the morning, parents may refer to the school principals. The Ministry will soon announce the schools selected for these classes by region all over Greece.

4 When will children be able to access education?

Enrollment in afternoon reception classes gradually started after the 10th of October 2015. More precise information for parents will be announced by the Ministry soon.

Enrollment in morning classes is open now for children in dispersed areas in urban settings. The Ministry will soon announce which schools will host the reception classes.

For more information, please refer to
http://www.minedu.gov.gr/ekpaideusi/refug-educ
and contact *info-refugees-education@minedu.gov.gr*

Field staff are encouraged to contact
the Greece Education Sector Working Group: *eswg.greece@gmail.com*,
if you have questions or need more support to communicate with refugee parents and children.

Thank you very much for your collaboration!

NOVEMBER 2016

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Education,
Research and Religious Affairs

Picture Credit: © UNICEF/Ergen/2015

THE INFORMATION ON ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

Information for Field Staff, Refugee Parents & children



1 Who is eligible?

All children have the right to access school education in Greece, without distinction.



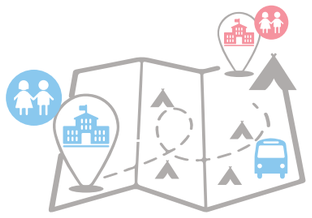
The unique condition for children to attend school is to be vaccinated, which lies under the responsibility of the Greek Ministry of Health.

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).

The following two options have been proposed by the Ministry.

CHILDREN LIVING IN OPEN TEMPORARY SITES:

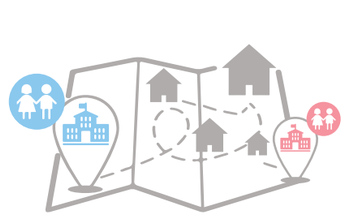


Children between 4-5 years old*
will be eligible to attend additional kindergarten facilities, which will be established within the open temporary sites.

Children aged between 6-15 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.

CHILDREN LIVING IN DISPERSED AREAS IN URBAN SETTINGS
(such as relocation accommodation, squats, apartments, hotels, and reception centres for asylum seekers & UAMs.):



Children aged between 4-5 years old
will be able to enroll in public kindergarten schools.

Children aged between 6-15 years old
living in dispersed areas in urban settings may go to schools near their place of residence, to enroll in the morning classes alongside Greek children. Schools are currently being identified by the Ministry so the distribution of children is balanced across selected schools, as well as across reception classes for migrant and refugee children where Greek is taught as a second language.

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

CHILDREN 4-5 years old

CHILDREN 6-15 years old

2 Who designs the curriculum?

The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs has exclusive authority over the design and implementation of formal education programmes.

UN organizations, other International Organizations (IOs), as well as NGOs with the proper certification from the Greek Institute of Education Policy will be able to run non-formal education programmes. For children of compulsory school age these educational programmes can only be organized during days and hours that do not conflict with formal education schedules. For the above purpose, as much as for organizing educational activities for children of 15+ years old and for adults, the premises of public schools may also be used after having acquired the necessary licenses.

The Ministry of Education will rely on UN organizations, and other IOs and NGOs to design and provide native language lessons for children, to provide adult education and to increase the number of 'cultural mediators' at open temporary sites and at educational facilities for refugees.

3 What is the process for enrolment?

FOR THE CHILDREN LIVING IN OPEN TEMPORARY SITES:



The Refugee Education Coordinators (**RECs**) of each accommodation site will **inform the parents about the school that their children will attend**, as well as **provide details of the transportation to and from the site.**



RECs will ask for the **parents' written consent to allow their children to commute in the buses** provided by the IOM, while **accompanied by selected escorts.**



RECs will **transmit all the above documents to the person responsible for the enrollment** of the children of each school.

RECs will **collect all documents required for the enrolment** (e.g. asylum card, medical/health record booklet, school certificates from the countries of origin, commuting consent, etc.) for all the children in the site for whom she/he is responsible.

FOR THE CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE THE OPEN TEMPORARY SITES,
namely children living in dispersed areas in urban settings (under different protection regimes):



The **parents** should **enroll the child in a school in their area of residence.**



Required documentation includes photocopies of the pupil's asylum card, medical/health record booklet, school certificates from the countries of origin, etc.



Proof of residence is normally needed, such as the address of stay if the person is hosted in organized accommodation or a contract/receipt for apartments rented/housing.



In the case of **refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced persons, insufficient documentation will be accepted**. School principals are aware of this particularity and will provide the necessary assistance and support.



To participate in all classes, the pupil must present a **medical/health record booklet by a pediatrician**, as well as the required **vaccination proof**. Yet, as above mentioned, insufficient documentation will be accepted, while school principals will provide assistance.



Evidence of prior schooling in country of origin is welcome, but in case of missing documents, school principals will proceed as aforementioned.