Reception - Greece

Reception System

Overview

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Relevant EU legislation

Greece is bound by the recast Reception Conditions Directive and has transposed its provisions through the Law 4540/2018 Adaptation of the Greek legislation to the provisions of Directive 2013/33 / EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013, on the requirements for the reception of applicants for international protection | Νόμος 4540/2018 (ΦΕΚ 91/ Α΄/22.05.2018) Προσαρμογή της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας προς τις διατάξεις της Οδηγίας 2013/33/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου

National legislation

22/05/2018: Greece transposes the recast Reception Conditions by Law 4540/2018. In 2019, L. 4540/2018 was replaced by the IPA (L. 4636/2019), which was further amended on 10 June 2022, by Law No 4939/2022 on “Legal code on reception, international protection for applicants of international protection/stateless persons and temporary protection in case of mass influx of displaced persons” | Νόμος 4939/2022 Κύρωση Κώδικα Νομοθεσίας για την υποδοχή, τη διεθνή προστασία πολιτών τρίτων χωρών και ανιθαγενών και την προσωρινή προστασία σε περίπτωση μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων αλλοδαπών

Competent authority and stakeholders

Authority responsible for reception

According to the Presidential Decree (PD) 106/2020, as amended by PD 77/2023, the following secretariats operate under the Ministry of Migration and Asylum

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- General Secretariat for the Reception of Asylum Seekers
- General Secretariat of Vulnerable Citizens and Institutional Protection (previously operated as Special Secretariat for Unaccompanied Minors)
- General Secretariat of Migration Policy

Reception and Identification Service (RIS): The Reception and Identification Service is the responsible authority for reception. It oversees the identification and registration of third country nationals and stateless persons (hereafter both terms will be referred as TCNs) that enter Greece without legal documentation. RIS is also responsible for the registration of asylum applications, and the provision of reception conditions, according to the relevant EU legislation. In addition, RIS, through its Directorates, is responsible for the operation and coordination of its regional services, composed of registration facilities (namely the Reception and Identification Centres - RIC and the Closed Controlled-Access Centres - CCAC, both of which constitute RIS' reception centres, where the reception and identification process, as well as the registration of asylum claims take place), and of accommodation facilities (namely the Controlled-Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of Asylum Seekers – CAFTAAS), as well as for the activation, deactivation or expansion of the above-mentioned facilities, according to needs.

In particular, RIS consists of the following units, which have, indicatively, the below-mentioned competencies:

- The Directorate for Support, which is responsible for the following: administrative support of RIS; training of RIS staff; drafting and updating of SOPs and operational tools; quality assurance of SOPs and tools; implementation of transfers of TCNs according to operational needs; data reporting and coordination of RIS IT systems; design, implementation and monitoring of European-funded programs aimed at fulfilling the country's obligations as defined by national and EU legislation; and the administrative management at central level of the provision of material reception conditions.
- The Department for Emergency Response, is responsible to coordinate stakeholders, namely RIS units, government agencies, international organizations and civil society organizations in emergency situations. The department is also responsible to implement operational response plans in the event of emergencies.

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- The Directorate of Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) and Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCAC), is responsible to coordinate and ensure effective operation of the currently eight RIS registration facilities, namely the three reception centres that operate in the mainland (RICs) and the five CCAC that operate in an equal number of eastern Aegean islands.
- The Directorate of Northern Greece Facilities, is responsible to coordinate and ensure smooth operation of accommodation facilities in Northern Greece (Controlled -Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of asylum seekers - CAFTAAs),
- The Directorate of Southern Greece Facilities is responsible to coordinate and ensure smooth operation of accommodation facilities in Southern Greece (Controlled -Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of asylum seekers - CAFTAAs)

The three Directorates, in cooperation with the Directorate for Support and the Department for Emergency Response, ensure the necessary conditions for the effective operation of RIS Facilities.

Other actors involved

RIS cooperates with other State actors to fulfil its mission, for example with the Hellenic Police, the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), the National Organization for Public Health (EODY), the Ministry of Education, and others.

According to article 45 Law 4939/2022

- Agencies of the European Union, such as the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), may provide assistance in reception and identification procedures, within the framework of their competences and in accordance with Operating Rules.
- UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, may monitor the above-mentioned procedures, provide information to those subject to the reception and identification process, and offer any assistance as needed, in accordance with its mandate and competencies.

Details of the cooperation between the Reception and Identification Service and the aforementioned bodies are regulated by memoranda.

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NGOs may also participate in the implementation of international protection, immigration and social integration actions upon registration in the Ministry's Register of Greek and Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Register of Members of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). (article 78, Law 4939/2022 as amended by article 44, Law 4960/2022).

Having in mind the above-mentioned synergies framework, below there is an indicative recording of the thematic areas of cooperation between RIS and other actors:

- EUAA supports reception and registration procedures.
- UNICEF supports actions for education and unaccompanied minors based on a Memorandum of Understanding (read more on Reception provisions for vulnerable persons Greece)
- National Emergency Response Mechanism (NERM), provides housing in shelters to unaccompanied minors who reside in RIS Facilities
- IOM implements various projects, including the provision of medical and psychosocial support services to RIS Facilities' residents ("Ippokratis I" project), the Assisted Voluntary Repatriation Program for those TCNs who wish to return to their country of origin, and the HELIOS Project for beneficiaries of international protection.
- EODY cooperates with RIS in the epidemiological monitoring of RIS Facilities ("Ippokratis II" project) ;
- EKKA (National Center for Social Solidarity, which belongs to the Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs) runs EMA (the Greek National Referral Mechanism for the protection of victims of human trafficking) that cooperates with RIS on that sector.
- The Ministry of Education has deployed staff to RIS Facilities, under the role of Refugee Education Coordinators, in order to facilitate access of minors to schools, as well as monitor and support school attendance.

Organisational aspects

The operation of RIS Facilities is supervised by the respective RIS Directorate, in cooperation with RIS hierarchy (RIS Governor and Deputy Governor). At field level, each Facility has a Head, who is responsible for its effective and smooth operation, staff issues, etc. The Registration (RIC and CCAC) and Accommodation (CAFTAAS) Facilities operate as regional services of RIS HQ. Accommodation

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programs (if available) may operate through partners (NGOs or local authorities), in the context of requirements set and monitored by RIS.

Allocation of applicants to geographical areas within the territory

Allocation to accommodation facilities in the mainland is based on the availability of places, the profile of the individual or family, possible vulnerabilities and special reception needs and their legal status, as well as on the general reception strategy of the country at a given time.

Staff and training

RIS staff is composed of professionals of various profiles, who exercise a broad range of duties ranging from administrative, technical, and financial ones to legal and managerial, while a number of staff cover high specialty roles, such as medical doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, etc.

The Department for Procedures and Training of RIS' Directorate for Support is competent to identify the training needs of RIS staff, as well as of staff of other actors that operate within RIS Facilities, such as health and psychosocial support staff, security, maintenance and cleaning personnel, and NGOs staff. The Department also has the competence to design, organize and deliver specialized trainings to cover such needs. In this regard, the Department may cooperate with specialized actors, including state actors, EU and international organizations, and NGOs.

All personnel, upon recruitment, attend a webinar that aims to introduce them to the main EU and national legal framework that regulates the reception of asylum seekers, as well as the structure and competence of the Reception and Identification Service. This webinar, which is designed and delivered by RIS, is followed by the delivery of EUAA entry-level training modules.

Following this induction training, staff members are enrolled by the Department for Procedures and Training in additional, more advanced training sessions, depending on their specific role and duties.

The Department delivers trainings through three different channels:

The first channel concerns the modules offered by EUAA, which cover a broad range of issues, including vulnerability, communication and info provision,

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conflict management, and others.

For the organization and delivery of those trainings, the Department drafts and uses an Annual Training Plan.

The second channel concerns training activities designed and delivered either by the Department directly, or by the Department in cooperation with other actors. Such trainings may fill-in thematic areas that are not already covered by EUAA modules, or provide more in-depth knowledge on certain issues. They may also aim to enhance understanding and effective implementation of standard operating procedures issued by RIS.

The third channel, is the RIS training platform, which has been designed by the Department and the Ministry's Directorate for Information and Communication Technologies to enhance the skills and knowledge of RIS' staff on several thematics of interest that are not covered by the EUAA training modules or by other actors.

Reception phases

All third-country nationals and stateless persons (TCNs), who enter the country without legal formalities are subject to reception and identification procedures. These persons are immediately taken to the Reception and Identification Centers, under the responsibility of the police or Coast Guard. The transfer may be carried out with the care of the Reception and Identification Service, in case of inability of the competent police or port authorities or for the rapid and appropriate transfer of persons belonging to vulnerable groups (article 39, Law 4636/2019 as amended by Law 4686/2020).

Since September 2022, TCNs who are already in the mainland should initially book an appointment through an online platform and then present themselves in one of the two registration facilities in Diavata (Thessaloniki) or Malakasa (Attica) to complete registration of their application.

All TCNs undergo a reception and identification procedure comprised of five steps.

The first step is the provision of information on rights, responsibilities and an overview of the stages of the registration and identification procedure that are to be followed.

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The second step is the submission to the reception and identification procedure.

The third step comprises two processes: the first process is the Identification and Registration, which is conducted by Hellenic Police officers, who are supported by FRONTEX staff. TCNs are fingerprinted, their personal data are recorded, and they are registered in the police database. The second process is the Medical and Psychosocial Screening, which aims to identify persons with special reception needs or who may require special medical assistance.

The fourth step is the referral to international protection procedures for those TCNs who wish to claim asylum. RIS conducts the full registration of asylum applications in an Information System that is also used by the Asylum Service (AS), which is the competent authority to examine the claims and issue a decision.

The fifth and final step is the further referral of TCNs to accommodation facilities, if they have claimed asylum (and, thus, are asylum seekers). Otherwise, TCNs are referred to other actors or competent authorities (IOM, Hellenic Police) for return or repatriation.

Arrival at the reception centre or mobile unit after arrest by the police / Coast Guard

Briefing: Upon arrival at the Registration Facility, the staff covers potential emergency needs, including through provision of food, water and clothing, according to needs. This action is followed by the implementation of the system of diagnosis and immediate identification of illness (triage), by competent staff of the Medical Screening and Psychosocial Support Unit. Triage is used to make a preliminary assessment of the medical and mental health condition of the newly arrived third country nationals and stateless persons. The aim is to immediately address potential medical emergencies, identify persons with infectious diseases that may present a risk for public health, and to identify persons that may require immediate or special assistance and prioritization during the registration process. At the same time, administrative staff create a list with the personal data that have been recorded so far and before the official registration process takes place.

The Information Provision Unit provides, with the support of interpreters, information on the rights and obligations of third country nationals who enter Greece without the necessary legal formalities, the steps of the reception and identification procedure that they are about to follow, the right to claim asylum, and on basic rules they have to follow during their stay in the RIC or the CCAC.

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Registration and identification procedures

Third-country nationals or stateless persons are then subjected to the reception and identification procedures, being in a regime of restriction of their freedom within the Center of Reception and Identification, by decision of each RIC/CCACI commander.

- Information provision (detailed) Third-country nationals or stateless persons receive detailed information by the Information Unit of the RIC / CCAC, in a language they understand, on their rights and obligations at the point of reception, the procedures they are about to follow, and their ability to claim asylum, or to participate in AVRR programs. Emphasis is also given on their obligation to cooperate with the competent authorities, including RIS.
- Inclusion in registration procedures EURODAC III biometric data is taken, in order to investigate whether an individual takes part for the first time in registration and identification procedures.

- Registration and Medical Screening Registration of personal [basic and additional] data in the Ministry's Information System "Alkyoni II", as well as recording of the willingness to seek asylum or voluntarily return to the country of origin or of former habitual residence.

  - Identity and Citizenship screening, biometric data for EURODAC II and face photo

  - Medical Screening and psychosocial assessment that aim to identify persons with special reception needs. If needed, a referral to a public health unit may take place. The medical screening is conducted by competent staff, including medical doctors, nurses, midwifes, psychologists, social workers, etc.

  - Care for Vulnerable Groups - Provision of Psychosocial Support

- Referral to International Protection procedures Full registration of the asylum claim. Biometric data for EURODAC I. Issuance of International Protection Applicant's Card.

Individuals who apply for International Protection (Asylum) are referred to the competent Regional Asylum Office for the personal asylum interview.

Further referral and relocation Third-country nationals or stateless persons who do not wish to be granted international protection are referred to the competent

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authorities.

Transfer of third-country nationals to other regional units

Following the registration of an asylum claim, an asylum applicant may be transferred to an accommodation facility in the mainland, upon the lifting of the geographical restriction imposed on newly arrived persons on the islands. The choice of the accommodation facility is based on several factors, most notably the availability of places, the profile of the individual or family, as well as the general reception strategy of the country at a given time.

Contingency planning

Greece has drafted a contingency plan in order to be able to cope with potential emergency situations that may arise, including cases of mass arrivals. In this regard, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum would cooperate with other competent actors, including the Ministry for Citizen Protection, and the Ministry of Health, and, where appropriate, mobilise additional resources, including staff and equipment. The Ministry of Migration and Asylum may also increase its accommodation capacity either by using available existing places (such as buildings or containers) or by temporarily placing tents, refugee housing units, etc.

Facilities

Overview of different types of reception facilities according to national classification

Law No 4825/2021 – published on 4 September 2021 - foresees that the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) can create three types of reception Facilities

- Reception and Identification Centres (RICs/K.Y.T.)
- Controlled Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of Asylum Seekers (CAFTAAS/ΕΔΠΦΑΑ)
- Closed Controlled Access Centers (CCAC/ΚΕΔ)

CCACs, which include both a RIC and a Controlled Access Facility for the Temporary Accommodation of asylum seekers are currently established and

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operate on five eastern Aegean islands. Three RICs operate in the mainland.

Controlled-Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of asylum seekers are used for the temporary accommodation of Asylum Seekers and are situated on the mainland in different locations. Since January 2022, facility management (maintenance, technical works, repairs, cleaning, security) has passed under the management of private companies.

R.I.C. and C.C.A.C. are established as Regional Services of the Reception and Identification Service and are divided among others into the following accommodation sections:

- Single men
- Families
- Single-parent families
- Unaccompanied minors

CCACs also operate as accommodation facilities for TCNs and stateless persons whose asylum application has been registered and asylum decision is pending.

Premises at the border

Name of the reception facility	Reception and Identification Centres (R.I.C.) / Closed Controlled Access Centres (C.C.A.C.)
Access description	Open/closed (Third-country and stateless persons are in a regime of restriction in the RICs and CCACs until their asylum application is registered and in any case for a maximum period of twenty-five (25) days. Then, applicants exit the CCAC premises freely, according to the rules of the internal regulation, using their asylum cards)
Management	Reception and Identification Service (RIS) Pre-removal centres that are under the management of the Hellenic Police, operate within the premises of Samos and Kos CCAC.
Type of applicants accommodated	Third country nationals and stateless persons (TCNs) that enter the territory without legal documentation - asylum seekers
Number of centres	8 centres

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Capacity	National Situational Picture Regarding the Islands at Eastern Aegean Sea is updated daily by the General Secretary for Information & Communication The 8 RICs and CCACs have a nominal capacity of 19,410 accommodation places (30-07-2025).
Location of the centres within the country	RICs are located in Evros land border area, in Malakasa (Attica region) and in Diavata (Central Macedonia region). A Mobile Registration Unit operates since September 2023 in Sintiki (Northern Greece), allowing RIS to conduct registration of asylum applications there as well. CCACs are located in Lesvos, Samos, Kos, Leros and Chios islands (Eastern Aegean).

Initial reception centres

Name of the reception facility	N/a
Regime	N/a
Management	N/a
Type of applicants accommodated	N/a
Number of centres	N/a
Capacity	N/a
Location of the centres within the country	N/a

Collective accommodation centres

Name of the reception facility	Controlled-Access Facilities for the Temporary Accommodation of Asylum Seekers (CAFTAAS)

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Regime	Open
Management	Regional Services of the Reception and Identification Service. Other actors may be involved.
Type of applicants accommodated	Asylum Seekers, beneficiaries of international protection (for up to 30 days after notification of asylum decision).
Number of centres	Currently 22 Accommodation Facilities operate. The list is available on the Ministry's website
Capacity	The 22 CAFTAAS have a nominal capacity of 21,504 accommodation places (30-07-2025).
Location of the centres within the country	Facilities are located throughout mainland Greece, divided into two Directorates, one for Northern and one for Southern Greece facilities. A list is available on the Ministry's website with information on the exact location

Individual accommodation centres (such as private houses, flats, hotels)

Name of the reception facility	N/a
Regime	N/a
Management	N/a
Type of applicants accommodated	N/a
Number of centres	N/a
Capacity	N/a
Location of the centres within the country	N/a

Temporary solutions when housing capacities is temporarily exhausted

Name of the reception facility	N/a

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Regime	N/a
Management	N/a
Type of applicants accommodated	N/a
Number of centres	N/a
Capacity	N/a
Location of the centres within the country	N/a

Reception facilities for applicants with special needs

The Reception and Identification Service (RIS) has established a CAFTAAS in Pyrgos, southern Greece, which is specialised in the provision of services to vulnerable persons. Nevertheless, applicants with special needs reside in all RIS Facilities, where competent staff provides appropriate support, on a case-by-case basis.

The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) provides accommodation and protection for women (either single or with children) who are victims of human trafficking or some other form of violence, in Short-term and Emergency shelters.

For gender-related needs and LGBTIQ+ persons, EKKA provides protection and accommodation based on referral made by RIS. Also, the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI), provides, upon referral by RIS facilities:

1. Information and specialized guidance
2. Psychological and social counselling (specialized support with a gender-sensitive approach)
3. Employment counselling
4. Legal counselling/information on women’s rights, relevant legislation, and the procedures required for filing a complaint, lawsuit, or other legal actions
5. Referral to public medical units, child protection actors, accommodation to specialised shelters, other support services, etc.

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According to articles 31 and 39 Law 4960/2022 supplementing Law 4939/2022 [art. 66ΚΕ & 66ΛΓ], the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection is the competent national authority for the overall protection of unaccompanied minors, including accommodation, and ensures housing and complementary services for unaccompanied minors, in

- Long-Term Accommodation facilities (Δομές Μακροχρόνιας Φιλοξενίας - Δ.Μ.Φ.), which are divided into:

  - Accommodation Centers for Unaccompanied Minors (Κέντρα Φιλοξενίας για Ασυνόδευτους Ανηλίκους - Κ.Φ.Α.Α.) up to eighteen (18) years of age and

  - Supervised Semi-Autonomous Living Apartments (Εποπτευόμενα Διαμερίσματα Ημιαυτόνομης Διαβίωσης - Ε.Δ.Η.Δ.) for unaccompanied minors from sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age. Unaccompanied minors receive services and benefits, such as housing, material benefits, financial aid, psychosocial support, interpretation, assistance in accessing education, vocational training and the labor market, legal assistance, access to health care.

- emergency accommodation facilities for unaccompanied minors living in precarious living conditions and identified through the National Emergency Response Mechanism.

In case short-term accommodation is needed prior to the transfer of unaccompanied minors to long-term accommodation, this is currently provided though the establishment of safe zones within certain RIS Facilities, each of which has a capacity to host 30 minors over 14 years old.

The Accommodation and Relocation Requests Management Unit of the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection (Management Unit) is responsible for:

- the management of accommodation requests of unaccompanied minors in an appropriate accommodation modality,
- the prioritization of requests, based on vulnerability criteria, and
- the coordination of every transfer, placement, accompaniment and accommodation of unaccompanied minors in places of temporary accommodation, long-term accommodation centers or in supervised apartments for semi-autonomous living.

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Material reception conditions provided in kind and cash

Definition of material reception conditions

According to articles 1 and 59 of Law 4939/2022, material reception conditions include the provision of accommodation (provided only in kind), food (in kind) and cash assistance to cover the needs of clothing, hygiene items, communication, school supplies, non-prescribed medication, and urban transportation. Material reception conditions are provided in order to ensure a sufficient standard of living with respect to human dignity.

Material reception conditions provided in kind

Type and purpose	Accommodation of asylum seekers is provided in the regional services of RIS, namely the controlled-access facilities for the temporary accommodation of asylum seekers (CAFTAAS) that operate in the mainland. Accommodation is also provided within RICs and CCACs, for third country nationals and stateless persons whose identification and registration process, as well as the registration of their asylum claim are still pending. Food provision covers three meals, namely breakfast, lunch and dinner. Special provisions are envisaged for persons with specific needs, according to the advice of medical doctors.

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Duration and recurrence	According to article 109, Law 4939/2022, material reception conditions are terminated with the issuance of a positive asylum decision. Beneficiaries who reside in RIS Facilities are required to leave them, thirty (30) days following the notification to them of the decision. For unaccompanied minors, the above period starts when they become 18 years old. Material reception conditions are also terminated upon a negative asylum decision at second instance.

Financial allowances and vouchers

Type and purpose	Material reception conditions may be provided in cash assistance, and aim to ensure a sufficient standard of living that guarantees their subsistence and protects their physical and mental health, with respect to human dignity. In particular, according to JMD 2857/2021 (FEK B’ 4496/29-09-21), cash assistance is provided to cover the needs of clothing, hygiene items, communication, urban transportation, and basic school supplies and non-prescribed medication.
Duration and recurrence	From the registration of the asylum application until the issuance of a positive asylum decision or a negative asylum decision at second instance.
Calculation and amount	The amount of cash assistance distributed to each household is proportionate to the family size. Its range is as follows: • 75 euros for one individual • 135 euros for a household of two • 160 euros for a household of three • 210 euros for a household of at least four If the accommodation place is not accompanied by food provision, the above-mentioned amounts are doubled for each category.

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Applicants granted allowance	Beneficiaries are adult asylum seekers and the members of their families, who reside in RIS Facilities or who reach adulthood while they reside in facilities for unaccompanied children. What is more, beneficiaries should not be employed or, if they are, the earnings from their employment should not suffice to afford them with an appropriate living standard, sufficient for their wellbeing.
Modalities of provision	Cash assistance is provided once a month, according to JMD 2857/2021 (FEK B' 4496/29-09-21).

Material reception conditions for vulnerable persons

Third-country nationals who have been identified as vulnerable benefit from special reception conditions within the accommodation facilities of the Reception and Identification Service. "Ippokratis I" programme aims to provide Primary Healthcare Services and Psychosocial Support. The services provided also include the supply of medical materials, equipment, and consumables, over-the-counter medication, referral pathways to secondary and tertiary healthcare, and emergency transportation of individuals in urgent or exceptional situations. Psychosocial support services are provided to victims of human trafficking, victims of gender-based violence and to other vulnerable individuals that may need support. When needed, referrals are made to external partners (EKKA, KETHI, etc.) for special accommodation for vulnerable individuals.

The reactivation of three Safe Zones within the Facilities of Northern Greece has commenced, in order to accommodate unaccompanied minors. Each Safe Zone has a capacity of 30 individuals. The operation of these Safe Zones has been entrusted to civil society organizations.

Through the IOM's Special Action for the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, it was made possible to provide non-food items to certain Reception and Identification Service (RIS) facilities, which host the largest number of individuals identified as victims of trafficking.

Meals are provided to all minors who reside in RIS accommodation Facilities, irrespective of the legal status of the children or their guardians.

Vulnerable TCNs are granted material reception conditions under the same terms as those applied to the general population of RIS accommodation facilities.

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Rights and obligations during reception

Provision of information and counselling

Modalities of information provision on benefits and obligations related to reception conditions	According to art. 39 of Law 4939/2022, RIS provides, among other, the following information to third country nationals and stateless persons who enter Greece without the legal formalities, as part of their identification and registration process: • their rights and responsibilities, at the stage of reception and in connection to the process of examination of their asylum claim • the possibility to apply for asylum • their transfer to other RIS Facilities (CAFTAAS), where they will reside for as long as their asylum claim is examined by the Asylum Service • the possibility to apply for inclusion in the Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration program • the provided services within the centre • the rules of the centre • the organisations operating within the centre • the exit procedure from the center

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Provision of legal assistance on the reception conditions available	Third country nationals who reside in Regional Services of RIS (Reception and Accommodation Facilities), have access to free legal counseling and/or representation at all stages of the asylum procedures by NGO staff operating within the field. Additionally, during the process of criminal investigation or interrogation, or during the appeal procedure against a first-instance rejection decision, they are entitled to free legal representation by a registered lawyer, upon consent and request. Legal assistance is provided by NGOs, which have access to the regional services of RIS, but also by private lawyers.
House rules	House rules are described in the Operating Regulations of CAFTAAs, RICs and CACCs. In addition, applicants residing in CAFTAAs sign an accommodation contract that describes in detail their accommodation rights and obligations during their stay.

Freedom of movement within the territory

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Assignment of a particular area of residence to applicants	Applicants can move freely in the Greek territory or in the area defined by a regulatory decision of the Minister of Migration and Asylum. The restriction of freedom of movement within a specific geographical area does not affect the inalienable sphere of private life and does not prevent the exercise of the rights provided in the Law. The Director of the Asylum Service may decide that the applicant resides in a specific place, when this is necessary for the rapid processing and effective monitoring of his application for international protection or only for absolutely justified reasons of public interest or public order. The restriction is mentioned in the international protection applicant's card. Applicants, for whom a place of residence has been determined, are provided with material reception conditions, as long as they reside within the geographical area indicated by the decision. In case of violation of the terms of the relevant decision on the part of the applicants, the provision of material reception conditions is interrupted, in accordance with the Law. An applicant may apply for temporary revocation of restrictions. The Authority's decision rejecting the application is made after an individual assessment and contains a full and thorough justification. A permit is not required when the applicant is called to appear before a public authority
Reporting obligations	Applicants are required to immediately notify the competent authorities of any change in their place of residence while their application for international protection is pending, in order to facilitate the communication of the national authorities with them and the smooth conduct of the examination process.

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Employment and vocational training

Time limit to access the labour market	Applicants for international protection, with the lapse of two (2) months after the registration of their asylum application, have access to the labour market. The right to access the labour market is automatically revoked in case of a negative decision, which does not have a suspensive nature, and the applicants do not have the right to stay in the country.
Criteria to access the labour market	Access is provided throughout the period of validity of the asylum card and only after the completion of two months from the registration of the asylum application. To access the labour market and social security, applicants for international protection are assigned a Tax number (AFM) and a Temporary Number for Social Security and Health Care for Aliens (PAPAYPA). Both AFM and P.A.A.Y.P.A. are granted along with the issuance of the International Protection Applicant's Card by RIS, correspond to it and remain active throughout the examination of the asylum application for international protection. Applicants residing in the regional facilities of RIS are required to inform reception authorities about their employment status.
Employment support for applicants	RIS, in cooperation with other actors, including international organizations and NGOs, implements several employment-related actions for asylum seekers residing in all its facilities. Indicatively, such activities include job fairs, CV-making, informational sessions on the employment rights in Greece, Greek language lessons, preparation for job interviews, legal advice, improvement of digital skills, link with legal employment opportunities, etc.

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Adults' access to vocational training	Applicants have access to registration and follow-up of vocational training programs under the same conditions as Greek citizens, regardless of whether they have access to the labour market. Access to vocational training linked to an employment contract presupposes access to the labour market, in accordance with the provisions of article 57 of the Law 4939/2022. (article 58, Law 4939/2022).
Access to tertiary education	There are no special provisions of law facilitating refugees and asylum seekers to enter universities in Greece. However, recognition of secondary education graduation qualifications allows an applicant to participate in the national examinations for entry to the higher education system.

Healthcare

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Medical screening	Third country nationals or stateless persons who enter Greece without the necessary legal documentation, have to undergo a reception and identification process, a crucial part of which is the medical screening, as it allows the Reception Authority to identify in a timely manner persons with vulnerabilities and special reception needs, as well as risks for the public health and take the necessary measures to respond to each case. Medical screening also includes a psychosocial screening component, conducted by psychologists and social workers. The medical doctors who are employed in the facilities of the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) are able to provide first degree medical treatment. If there is a need for a more in-depth examination of an individual's condition or for specialised treatment, referral to an appropriate public healthcare unit takes place. Similarly, psychosocial support staff may refer a person, according to needs, to appropriate actors who provide specialised support. Following the completion of the registration process and during the stay phase in the accommodation facilities of RIS, asylum seekers continue to have access to medical doctors and psychosocial support staff (psychologists and social workers). It is up to the competent staff to decide whether they can provide treatment within the facility or further refer the case to an appropriate public healthcare unit. The medical check-up is carried out with respect for human dignity and is necessarily accompanied by appropriate information to those undergoing it about the reasons for which it is carried out, as well as the treatment that will be followed, if necessary, in a language that the interested parties understand, taking into account their individual situation, including their age and gender.
	Efforts are made to have the medical examination in the presence of an interpreter of the same gender to the applicant.

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Level of healthcare	Medical assistance and medication are provided to asylum seekers in the same way as provided to citizens, free of charge. Medical treatment includes: a) preventive medicine benefits; b) clinical, diagnostic, extra-clinical and laboratory examinations; c) dental care; d) hospital care; e) obstetric care; f) rehabilitation operations, such as physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy as well as the provision of medical aids and consumables to deal with treatment and rehabilitation issues of the injury or disease or disease on a case-by-case basis; and g) pharmaceutical treatment.
Access to healthcare	Temporary Number for Security and Health Care for Aliens (PAAYPA) is needed to access medical care and health services. The holder of the P.A.A.Y.P.A. has access to health services based on the provisions of article 33 of Law 4368/2016 (A' 21). In case of rejection of the application for international protection, and in case this rejection does not have a suspensive nature, the P.A.A.Y.P.A. is automatically deactivated and the beneficiary ceases to have access to the above services. Exceptionally, when the rejection decision concerns an unaccompanied minor, the P.A.A.Y.P.A. remains active until the return decision is executed or the unaccompanied minor reaches the age of majority.

Education for minors

Enrollment in public education (primary and secondary education) is mandatory for minor applicants for international protection and minor children of applicants. Enrollment takes place under similar conditions as Greek nationals. The MMA closely cooperates with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to ensure that all children that are hosted in its facilities have access to school as soon as possible and in any case within three months of their asylum application

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registration. In this regard, the two Ministries have cooperated in the deployment of Refugee Education Coordinators in all RIS Facilities, to facilitate the access of the above-mentioned target group to public schools. Furthermore, RIS, in cooperation with other actors, including universities, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (public schools, teachers, etc.), private schools, international organizations, and NGOs, implements several actions, targeted to enhance the attendance of school, raise awareness on bullying and how to address it, provide advice to parents on how they can support their children, etc. Kindergartens operate within all RIS Facilities. If the minor applicants and the minor children of the applicants do not comply with the obligation of par. 1 and do not register or attend the respective school courses, because they do not wish to join the education system, the material reception conditions may be limited in accordance to article 61 and furthermore, administrative sanctions provided also for Greek citizens may be imposed on the adult members of the minor's family.

Moreover, according to L. 3879/2010, Zones of Educational Priorities are established in the primary and secondary education, for the students, including asylum seekers and refugees, who do not speak Greek, or have a limited knowledge of the Greek language, so as to receive additional support aiming in their smooth integration in the formal education system.

Socio-cultural orientation and language learning

Access to socio-cultural orientation	Intercultural mediation services are provided • In Immigrant Integration Centers • In In selected Community Centers (read more about: "Program to strengthen/promote intercultural mediation services in Community Centers/Municipal Immigrant Integration Centers") • To agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations within the framework of reception and protection programs for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.
Language classes	Language classes are offered for applicants in reception.

Sufficient means

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Arrangement of private accommodation

Asylum seekers have the right to reside outside of the Facilities of the national reception system, making their own arrangements for their accommodation, with the obligation to inform the competent authorities of their current address. However, it is to be noted that only asylum seekers who opt to reside in RIS Facilities have access to services provided by RIS, as well as the financial allowance.

Contribution to reception and healthcare costs

No contribution is required from the part of asylum seekers for the provision of reception conditions, including the coverage of healthcare costs.

Sufficient means test

No sufficient means test is conducted by the reception authorities. However, applicants for international protection who reside in RIS Facilities and benefit from the provision of material reception conditions are required to inform RIS in case they become employed, by presenting the relevant documentation (e.g. a copy of the contract). Failure to comply with this obligation may trigger the withdrawal of material reception conditions, as per art. 61 of Law 4939/2022.

Sanction regimes, reduction or withdrawal of material reception conditions

Circumstances for reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions

By decision of the competent Reception Authority, the material conditions of reception can be reduced or in exceptional and dully justified cases, can be withdrawn when the applicants:

1. while they are provided with housing, they leave the accommodation that has been assigned to them, without informing the competent authority, or without receiving permission to do so, in the cases that is required, or leave

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the place of residence determined by the competent Authority without having obtained any required permit;
2. they do not comply with the requirements for declaration of data, such as home or residence address, employment contracts, or for personal representation, or do not respond to requests for information provision or do not attend, as part of the process of examining their application for international protection, in a personal interview within the time limit set by the competent authorities;
3. have submitted a subsequent application.

For cases of (1) and (3), in case the applicant presents themselves on their initiative before the competent Authority, the latter must issue a decision with appropriate reasoning about the resumption (partial or full) of the material reception conditions, by taking into consideration the reasons for having committed (1) and/ or (2).

Possible sanctions and procedure

The competent Reception Authority may:

- limit the material conditions of reception when it finds that the applicant, without good reasons has not applied for international protection as soon as possible, upon arrival in the Greek Territory.
- terminate access to the Reception Material Conditions when it is found that the applicant has concealed financial resources and has therefore benefited in an unfair manner from the Reception Material Conditions.
- impose the suspension of the provision of material conditions as a sanction in cases of serious violation of the provisions of the Regulation of reception facilities, which disrupts their smooth operation and the coexistence of individuals in them, especially in case of particularly violent behaviour. At the same time, the relevant Police Director is informed immediately and in the case of the General Police Directorates of Attica and Thessaloniki, the Police Director in charge of Alien's affairs, in order to ascertain whether there is a case of application of restriction of movement.

The decision to restrict or terminate the provision of material reception conditions shall be taken by the competent Reception Authority on an individual and objective basis and shall be reasoned. When making a decision to terminate or limit the material conditions for receiving or enforcing the sanction the special status of the person shall be taken into account, particularly in the case of

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vulnerable persons. The decision to restrict or terminate host material conditions may not apply to the applicant's access to medical care and should not make it impossible for applicants to access basic means of ensuring a decent standard of living. Decisions restricting or terminating the provision of material conditions shall be communicated to applicants in a language they understand.

Review of the sanction decision

The applicant may submit an appeal before the Administrative Court against the decision restricting or withdrawing material reception conditions, according to the Code for Administrative Law Proceedings In case of appeal, the applicant of international protection may receive free legal aid and representation, according to the terms and conditions of the Law 3226/2004.

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