



Please cite as: EUAA, '[4.6.3. Assessing the age of an applicant claiming to be a child](#)' in *Asylum Report 2024*, juin 2024.

4.6.3. Assessing the age of an applicant claiming to be a child

4.6.3. Assessing the age of an applicant claiming to be a child

The number of unaccompanied children arriving to Italy rose throughout 2023,^{[1073](#)} and to address this challenge, a new legislative decree allows, in the event of emergency situations (for example substantial, multiple and frequent arrivals or rescues at sea), the public security authority to order anthropometric tests or other medical examinations (including X-rays) to identify age. In these cases, the authority must give immediate notice to the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Tribunal for Minors, which authorises the execution in writing or, in cases of particular urgency, orally and subsequently confirmed in writing. The law also foresees a detailed procedure for the drafting of the reports on the examinations and relevant appeal mechanisms. Moreover, the law amended the ordinary procedure for age assessments, providing that the assessment must be carried out by a multidisciplinary and multi-professional team of experts (composed of a paediatrician, a psychologist specialised in child development or a child neuropsychiatrist, a cultural mediator and a social assistant) and completed within a period of 60 days.^{[1074](#)} ASGI highlighted that this is a derogation from previous legislation, when only a judicial authority was allowed to initiate the assessment, which had to be carried out by a multidisciplinary team.^{[1075](#)} Prior to the new law, Save the Children and UNHCR presented a mapping on the identification procedure and age assessments for unaccompanied minors and suggested further efforts to harmonise divergent practices across the country and to train staff on the specific procedures.^{[1076](#)}

A new methodology for age assessments was proposed for adoption in Bulgaria, following EUAA guidelines. The methodology is planned to be piloted from March 2024 after officers assigned for this task are properly trained.

Updated work instructions were published on the age assessment process in the Netherlands.^{[1077](#)} In Sweden, MRI pictures of a knee joint can only be made in one location since May 2023, but this has not caused any delays in the process.^{[1078](#)}

In Cyprus, the Refugee Law was amended to state that asylum seekers who do not consent to the medical examination for an age assessment are presumed to be adults. However, they can submit additional information at any stage of the process to establish their minority and can request the medical examination at a later stage, which cannot be disregarded by the Asylum

Service.[1079](#)

The International Rescue Committee Hellas in Greece observed occasional shortcomings with the institutions accredited to do an age assessment: doctors and medical staff were not always aware of the specific legislative and policy framework.[1080](#)

The Irish Refugee Council received information from Tusla, the Irish Child and Family Agency, that a policy or internal guidelines did not exist in 2022 on age assessments for unaccompanied children who were referred from the International Protection Office or Dublin Airport. In 2023, the organisation noted that a revised policy was partially implemented.[1081](#)

- [1073](#)Ministry of the Interior, Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration | Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento per la libertà civili e l'immigrazione. (July 2023). *Cruscotto statistico gionaliero [Daily statistical dashboard]*.
http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_07-2023.pdf
- UNICEF. (2023, September 29). *Migranti: aumentati del 60% i minori stranieri non accompagnati. Oggi a Roma la conferenza stampa UNICEF sulla missione a Lampedusa [Migrants: unaccompanied foreign minors increased by 60%. Today in Rome the UNICEF press conference on the mission to Lampedusa]*.
- [1074](#)Italian Government, Presidency of the Council of Ministers | Governo Italiano, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri. (27 September 2023). *Comunicato stampa del Consiglio dei Ministri n. 52 [Press release from the Council of Ministers No 52]*.
- [1075](#)Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration | Associazione per gli Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione. Input to the Asylum Report 2024.
- [1076](#)Save the Children, & United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Mappatura sullo stato attuale delle procedure di identificazione e accertamento dell'età [Mapping on the current state of identification and age assessment procedures]*.
- [1077](#)Immigration and Naturalisation Service | Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst. (2023, June 8). *WI 2023/6 Leeftijdsbepaling [WI 2023/6 Age determination - Immigration and Naturalization Service]*.
- [1078](#)National Board of Forensic Medicine | Rättsmedicinalverket. (2023). *Medicinsk åldersbedömning – så här går det till [Medical age assessment – this is how it goes]*.
<https://www.rmv.se/wp-content/uploads/Broschyr-Medicinska-%C3%A5ldersbed%C3%B6mningar.pdf>
- [1079](#)Αριθμός 86(Ι) του 2023 ΝΟΜΟΣ ΠΟΥ ΤΡΟΠΟΠΟΙΕΙ ΤΟΥΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΠΡΟΣΦΥΓΩΝ ΝΟΜΟΥΣ ΤΟΥ 2000 ΕΩΣ 2022 [Number 86(I) of 2023 an Act to amend the Refugee Laws of 2000 to 2022], January 2023.

- [1080](#)International Rescue Committee Hellas. Input to the Asylum Report 2024.
- [1081](#)Irish Refugee Council. *Input to the Asylum Report 2024*.
https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-02/irish_refugee_council.pdf

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu